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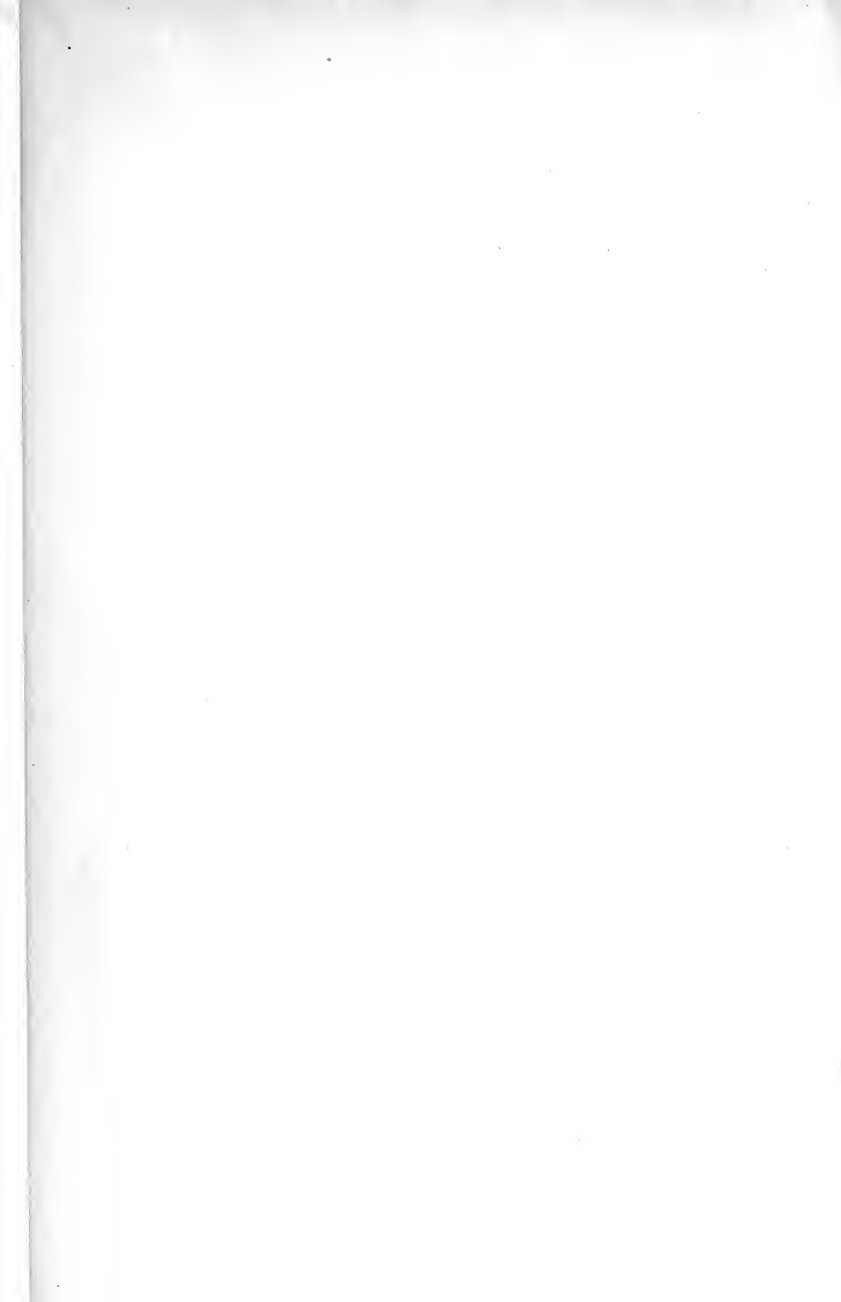
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L. S. Emery.





# HISTORICAL PAPERS

EDITED BY

THE REV. JOHN MORRIS, S.J., F.S.A.



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## PREFACE.

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I HAVE the satisfaction of collecting into a second volume a continuation of the series of various Historical Papers that have been entrusted to my Editorship. In the interest of the subjects and in the ability of their handling, I think I may be allowed to say that they in no way fall short of their predecessors in the first volume of the series. Bound up in volumes, they will take their permanent place on the reader's shelves; but it must not be forgotten that the Papers can always be had separately, and that the greatest amount of good that may be expected from their publication, would be derived from their separate circulation. The members and friends of the Catholic Truth Society will do well to bear this in mind, and to endeavour to advance the good work that each writer has had at heart, by helping forward the circulation of each individual tract on every appropriate occasion. It is sadly true of Catholic publications that competent writers are more easily found than a sufficiency of readers; and labour is spent, comparatively speaking, in vain amongst us, which if employed on congenial productions would be used wholesale by our adversaries.

JOHN MORRIS, S.J.

31, *Farm Street, London, W.*

*June 7, 1893.*

# CONTENTS.

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	<i>page</i>
VII. HOW "THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND WASHED HER FACE" . . . . .	I
By the Rev Sydney F. Smith, S.J.	
VIII. ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY, 1572 . . . . .	29
By the Rev. William Loughnan, S.J.	
IX. THE ROOD OF BOXLEY, OR HOW A LIE GROWS . . . . .	61
By the Rev. T. E. Bridgett, C.S.S.R.	
X. THE FIRST EXPERIMENT IN CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY . . . . .	119
By James Carmont.	
XI. WAS ST. AIDAN AN ANGLICAN? . . . . .	151
By the Rev. Sydney F. Smith, S.J.	
XII. THE GORDON RIOTS . . . . .	171
By Lionel Johnson, B.A.	



## How "the Church of England washed her face."

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BY THE REV. SYDNEY F. SMITH, S.J.

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WHEN the continuity of Anglicanism with the Church of England is questioned, and the serious nature of the Reformation changes is insisted upon, the Church Defence lecturer has his ready reply in a comparison which is considered to settle the controversy without need of further examination. What the Reformation did was to sweep away certain Popish abuses, which had sprung up in the middle ages, and tarnished the primitive purity of doctrine. The Church of England "washed her face," an operation which did not involve then, any more than it does elsewhere, a dissolution of personal identity.

In the mouth of a Protestant who glories in that designation, the similitude is in some sense intelligible. Whether continuity was broken or not, there was certainly a transition of English belief from a doctrinal system which Protestants regard as filthy to one which they regard as pure. But Dean Hook, who first used the phrase, believed, when he spoke of the Church "washing her face," that the spirit actuating the Reformation changes was Catholic in the sense in which High Churchmen understand the term. And the Dean has managed to read this idea into his history of the period so completely, that, as

a writer in the *Guardian* of September 17, 1890, has observed, "any one might read his Lives of Parker and Grindal without discovering that they were distinctly Zwinglian, and would find the Calvinism of Whitgift almost concealed." In this strange perversion of history he has been followed by modern advocates of continuity, who probably rely largely for their facts on a convenient work like the Dean's *Archbishops of Canterbury*. There are other High Churchmen, however, who have given heed to the new publications of original documents, and the more exhaustive studies of recent years, and they have come to a very different conclusion as to the character and effect of the Tudor measures. For them the scrubbing-brush was dipped in very muddy water indeed. Not till the days of Laud, nearly a century later, did any operation which could be called washing take place, and then the dirt removed was just that which the Tudor changes had laid on :

There is no history of the Church of England which gives any adequate idea of the degradation into which religious observances had fallen at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries, and the consequence is that few people understand the immense debt of gratitude which they owe to Archbishop Laud for the recovery from that condition—a recovery almost wholly due to his indefatigable endeavours to restore a more Catholic tone to doctrine and practice. We propose, therefore, in this and two following articles to supply this defect as far as may be possible. (*Guardian*, Nov. 9.)

These are the words of Mr. Pocock, words with which he begins his three recent articles in the *Guardian*<sup>1</sup> on the "Church of England in the Times

<sup>1</sup> See *Guardian*, Nov. 9, Nov. 23, Nov. 30, 1892.

of the Tudors and Stuarts." Mr. Pocock's authority on the Reformation period is well known, and he is a leader among those who have pointed out that till the time of Laud hardly a vestige of modern High Church views can be discovered. It is to be hoped that he will republish his three valuable articles. Meanwhile, as their interest is so great, we propose to set before our readers a summary of their contents.

Mr. Pocock's purpose is to show that the Elizabethan Church passed through an original Zwinglianism to more and more pronounced Calvinism, and that the passage was attended by a parallel downward progress in the religious spirit and morality of the country.

Elizabeth's religious policy, though worked out under different conditions, was in principle identical with that of her father. She probably felt very little attraction for Protestantism in itself, and was certainly averse to its harsher manifestations. She placed herself at its head, because circumstances indicated this position as her best chance of maintaining and enlarging her sovereignty. The two ideas in reference to ecclesiastical affairs which she had most at heart, were that the Bishops were nothing but her delegates, and that Church property was an excellent quarry for replenishing her finances. Her well-known answer to the Bishop of Ely illustrates the first of these points :

Proud Prelate, I understand you are backward in complying with your agreement, but I would have you know that I who made you what you are can unmake you, and if you do not forthwith fulfil your engagement by God I will immediately unfrock you.

And, says Mr. Pocock :

Cecil regarded them as mere officers of the State. . . . Among his memoranda occurs the following : "It is expedient that the Queen shall be well informed of the sufficiency of the Bishops, with a view to the removal or reform of such as are out of credit with the people under their charge for their manifest insufficiency or covetousness." . . . Neither can any other view of the office of a Bishop be found in any utterance till near the time when Bancroft preached his celebrated sermon in 1588.

Of the Queen's inroads on the Church lands he gives the following account :

By an Act passed in the first year of the reign of Elizabeth, the Queen was empowered to exchange the lands of any vacant bishopric for impropriate tithes which had belonged to the monasteries in the diocese. The Act provided that the exchange should be on equal terms. But during the vacancy of the see there was no one to raise objections, and the exchange effected was simply robbery, the newly appointed Bishop being generally some insignificant person who was glad enough to accept the preferment, however impoverished and clogged with uncomfortable conditions. . . . Grindal, it seems, had scruples whether he ought to accept a bishopric fettered with such conditions, and applied by letter to his friend Peter Martyr for advice. But before he received any answer he had decided the question on his own responsibility, and consented to the spoliation, without which he would never have succeeded to the see of London, rendered vacant by the deprivation of the celebrated Edmund Bonner. The value of the lands taken from Canterbury alone was £1,300, which is equivalent to several thousand pounds of the present day. And it appears from a letter written by the Queen herself, which has never been printed, that the long delay which took place before the confirmation of the elects of Canterbury, London, and Ely, was owing chiefly to the fact that the exchange between these sees

and the Crown of certain temporalities had not yet been effected. The same account has to be given of the long intervals that took place between the death or translation of a Bishop and the appointment of his successor. The sees had been in some cases stripped too much to admit of any further spoliation, but it was easy to appropriate the revenues of the bishopric during the vacancy of the see, and this is the only reason to be assigned for the average interval of two to three years during which each bishopric was from time to time kept vacant; as well as for the fact that Bristol and Ely were each without a Bishop for thirty years of the reign. Oxford enjoyed episcopal superintendence for exactly three years and six months during the forty-four years of the reign of Elizabeth, the revenue of the see going to Sir Francis Walsingham, who was accused when he founded a divinity lecture in the University of hiding sacrilege under the pretence of propagating truth. This system of spoliation was continued all through the reign at each successive avoidance of a see; so that when Day succeeded Wickham at Winchester in 1596 he demurred to surrendering a rent charge of £400 a year, on the ground that the see which had been estimated at £3,000 a year would then be reduced to £500. He was thereupon suspended by the Queen till he had made a compromise, much, it was said, to the prejudice of his successors in the bishopric, but as he himself expressed it, as much as his conscience would allow.

Nor was it the Sovereign only who saw in the Church property mainly an opportunity for plunder :

We have said that the Bishops were for the most part insignificant persons. Many of them were also men of indifferent character, and few of them are altogether free from the imputation of nepotism, covetousness, truckling to the civil authorities, impoverishing their sees by letting out the lands on long leases, and in more than one or two cases, one an Archbishop, purloining the lead from the cathedrals.

And again, in the second article :

I suppose I should not be far from the truth if I were to describe the Episcopate of Elizabeth's reign as having scarcely any other history than that of entering upon their bishoprics under simoniacal contracts made with the Queen or her favourites, of spoiling their dioceses to the prejudice of their successors during their occupancy of the see, of engaging in suits for dilapidations upon a death or translation between the newly appointed Bishop and the outgoing prelate or his heirs.

Mr. Pocock tells us, "it is no subject for wonder that the Bishops are such as we have described them. The choice for the Queen and her sagacious Minister was very limited," and all the bishoprics save one had to be filled up. Perhaps the Queen and her Minister had independent reasons for not desiring men of much character. Better men, even if they were to be found among the Protestants, would have been less pliant instruments in the royal hands. Still, as Mr. Pocock reminds us, her choice was limited to a certain class, the men of Protestant leanings, who on her sister's accession had fled into Germany and Switzerland :

Of the clergy who had been imprisoned or banished during the reign of her sister Mary, there were two classes who may be roughly designated as Zwinglians and Calvinists. Those who had been imprisoned had such violent altercations that one party refused to communicate with the others, whom they designated as free-willers, because they would not commit themselves to all the horrors of an unmitigated Calvinism. They were also at issue about certain minor matters, such as the lawfulness of playing at bowls. Quarrels of a similar kind had originated amongst the exiles, who had been refused admission at all places where Lutheranism prevailed, being designated by the Lutherans as the devil's martyrs, because of their supposed

adoption of the tenets of Zwingli or Calvin. They had settled in various towns of Switzerland and in considerable numbers at Frankfort. Here violent altercations arose, the moderate party being content to abide by the Zwinglian form of doctrine which as they thought pervaded the Second Prayer-book of the reign of Edward VI., whilst the more fanatical considered the book as too Papistical, and were for a further reformation of it, such as had been contemplated at the time of the premature death of the King. These latter retired in a body to Geneva and Basel. Speaking generally these were Calvinists and the others Zwinglians. The two systems may be sufficiently, though, perhaps, roughly described as the one consisting mainly in the disparagement or denial of sacramental grace, the sacraments being regarded as symbols and not instruments of grace ; the other, pronouncing the sacraments as in some way efficacious, but only to the elect, by increasing the grace they previously possessed and from which it was impossible for them entirely and finally to fall away. Zwinglianism had been, however, somewhat on the wane since the Consensus Tigurinus of 1549, when rationalism seemed for a time to have bowed before the piety and the genius of Calvin. Such were the parties from which Bishops had to be chosen, and for the most part the preference was given to the Frankfort and Zurich exiles who adopted the more moderate position, and were likely to give less trouble to the civil power.

We can thus perceive what was the doctrinal position of the Elizabethan Hierarchy, how far removed they were from the thoughts of modern High Churchmen. Cheney, the former tutor of Campion, who became Bishop of Gloucester, was the only one among them who was so much as a Lutheran in his views, and his Lutheranism brought him into trouble. That such people had no conception of anything Divine or sacramental in their office goes without saying :

As to the belief in an Apostolical succession in the Episcopate, it is not to be found in any of the writings of the Elizabethan Bishops. Unmistakable evidence of this as regards Bishop Jewel of Salisbury exists in his correspondence with Archbishop Parker with regard to the interference of Lancaster, Archbishop-elect of Armagh, in ordaining priests in his diocese. It seems that Lancaster had taken upon himself to admit divers persons into holy orders, and amongst them one whom Jewel had for eight years, for what appeared to himself good reasons, refused to ordain. He makes no complaint of the illegality, much less of the invalidity of the act, but only of the indiscretion of the Archbishop-elect. Now, this letter is dated April 26th, 1568, and June 13th in the same year Lancaster was consecrated by the Archbishop of Dublin and the Bishops of Meath and Kildare. If he is the same person who had held the see of Kildare 1550-4, he must either have acted as Bishop without being consecrated, or else he underwent a second consecration in 1568. There is nothing more wonderful in the whole history of the Church in England at a time when probably not a single Bishop was to be found who believed in his own Divine commission or in the efficacy of the sacraments, when almost without exception they were indifferent to any other considerations than that of promotion and the providing for their own families.

Mr. Pocock does not discuss the bearing of this general disbelief in the sacramental character of Holy Orders on the validity of the Orders conferred. Personally he would evidently say that it had none ; that by God's singular providence a sufficient rite had been administered by prelates sufficiently qualified and that validity was therefore happily secured. The *Guardian* (Nov. 9th) also takes this line, in a leader on Mr. Gilbert Child's article in the November *Contemporary*. It is there maintained that the intention of the minister being acknowledged even by (Roman) Catholics to be merely the intention to do whatever



our Lord may have intended by the ceremony, no argument against the Elizabethan Orders can be raised on this ground. It would be beside our purpose to enter adequately into this question, but we would remark by the way that an equivocation lurks in this representation of the Catholic doctrine. When the form employed is free of ambiguity, and has its own certain sense attached to it by the Church which sanctions it, the intention above stated is enough, and there may consequently be valid administration even when there are heretical views as to the meaning of the form in the mind of the officiating minister. But when the form employed is ambiguous, still more when the ambiguity is determined in an heretical sense by the authorities who draw it up, an heretical acceptance of its meaning in the mind of the officiating minister can render his act invalid. This is only according to the ordinary laws of speech. When words are plain we go by their plain meaning; when they are ambiguous, we look to the mind of the speaker to determine which of the possible senses comprised within the ambiguity is intended. Now the form of ordination used under Elizabeth was at the least ambiguous. When compared with the Catholic ordinals in previous use, we see that it had been altered in such a way as to lend itself to the Zwinglian doctrine, according to which the essence of ordination lies in appointment by public authority to minister in the congregation, and the religious rite is merely a ceremonious mode of conferring the appointment.<sup>1</sup> Such a rite in the hands of men with views like

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Art. xxiii., which contains a similar studied ambiguity.

these Elizabethan clergy is held by us to be clearly invalid.<sup>1</sup>

To return from this digression. Other sacraments fared as ill as Orders. Extreme Unction disappeared for ever : and Confirmation was lightly regarded.

As regards the rite of confirmation, there seems every reason to believe that it was seldom administered even in the early days of Elizabeth. We know for certain that it was much neglected towards the end of the sixteenth century. The early age at which it had been usual to administer it probably formed an excuse for its gradual disuse, for it is not likely that any Bishop in the reign of Elizabeth believed in it as anything else but a ratification of the baptismal promises on the part of the recipient of the rite.

Such is Mr. Pocock's account of the Bishops. Of the inferior clergy he has as unpleasant a tale to tell. The Church Defence doctrine is that the Elizabethan changes were generally felt to be both necessary and becoming, even by the Catholics, who accordingly found little difficulty in conforming : that the number of the clergy who stood out and started the "Roman schism" in the country fell short of two hundred. Catholic writers have often shown the untenability of this view. But in vain : it is still preached up and down the country, and even Archbishops have not refused to smile upon it. Will they now abandon this unhistorical contention, in view of Mr. Pocock's testimony against it?

What is commonly affirmed that all the clergy conformed to the new order with the exception of about 200 cannot possibly be true. That number nearly represents the number of Bishops, Deans, Archdeacons, Canons of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Estcourt, *Anglican Orders*, cc. iv. v.

Cathedrals, Heads of Houses, and Fellows of Colleges at Oxford and Cambridge who are known to have refused to adopt the new service of the Prayer-book, which, it must not be forgotten, was materially different from that which is in use now. And the great number of ordinations which took place in the early years of Elizabeth's reign, and the number of priests and deacons ordained from time to time, prove that there must have been a large number of vacancies in the parsonages of the country. It is impossible that the number should have been so small as 192, as thirty-four years later, in the year 1602, the number of Roman priests who were living peaceably and giving no trouble to the authorities is spoken of as being considerable. The survivors of persons who were priests in 1558 could have been counted on the fingers in 1602 if there had been, as has been alleged, only 192 at the earlier date. Moreover, we know that in many dioceses a large proportion of the parishes were not served at all. Again, in the first year of Grindal's episcopate many of the clergy had obtained licence to live beyond seas, upon what was called misliking of religion, and their places were partially filled by thirty different ordinations which he held, at which he admitted 160 deacons and nearly as many priests to holy orders, a much larger number than can be accounted for by the deaths of incumbents or curates. . . . Archbishop Parker, too, held five ordinations at Lambeth in less than three months after his consecration, at the last of which alone there were 155 priests and deacons ordered. The same conclusion comes out from the information given, January 24, 1561, by the Bishop of Ely—viz., that of the 152 churches in his diocese only 52 were properly served, there being 34 that had neither rectors nor vicars. It appears also that in the diocese of Norwich about half of the eight or nine hundred parishes had no rector or vicar, though the want was in some places supplied by a curate. And in the year 1565, so great was the destitution that the returns from about half the dioceses show that nearly a thousand parishes were wholly without spiritual superintendence. In the diocese of Lincoln there were about 100 vacant cures, whereas in two Welsh dioceses

there were none. Is it conceivable that here and in the Isle of Man, where there could scarcely have been services in the vernacular, there being no translations of either Bible or Prayer-book, the older clergy should have continued their ministrations for a time after the old fashion? About the same time Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich, says of his 1,200 churches 430 were vacant. If this is not sufficient to prove that the clergy did not all conform, what is the meaning of Jewel's observation in his letter to Peter Martyr, August 1, 1559? "Now that religion is everywhere changed the Mass priests absent themselves altogether from public worship, as if it were the greatest impiety to have anything in common with the people of God." (*Zurich Letters*, i. p. 39.)

If the clergy were so largely Catholic, we can assume that the laity were similarly disposed towards the old faith: and we should anticipate the same distinction among them of a smaller number remaining true to their faith at all costs, and a large majority yielding outward conformity out of deference to the times, while they preserved their Catholicism in secret. And so it was. We have Mr. Brewer's well-known testimony that not till late in her reign would it have been safe for Elizabeth to take a religious census of the nation. Mr. Pocock cites a passage from an interesting account of the diocese of Chichester in 1569, which tells in the same direction.

In many churches they have no sermons, not one in seven years, and some not one in twelve years. Few churches have their quarter sermons according to the Queen's injunctions. In Boxgrave there is a very fair church and therein is neither parson, vicar, nor curate, but a sorry reader. In the deanery of Medhurst there are some beneficed men which did preach in Queen Mary's days and now they do not, nor will not, and yet keep their livings. Others are fostered in gentlemen's houses, and some betwixt Surrey and Hampshire, and are hindrances of true religion,

and do not minister. Others come not at their parish church, nor receive the Holy Communion at Easter: but at that time get them out of the country until that feast be passed. In the church of Arundel certain altars do stand yet to the offence of the godly. They have yet in many places images hidden and other Popish ornaments ready to set up the Mass again within twenty-four hours' warning. In the town of Battle when a preacher doth speak anything against the Pope's doctrine, they will not abide, but get them out of the church. In many places the people cannot yet say their Commandments, and in some not the articles of their belief. In the Cathedral Church of Chichester there be very few preachers resident; of thirty-one Prebendaries scarcely four or five. Few of the aldermen of Chichester be of a good religion, but are vehemently suspected to favour the Pope's doctrine, and yet they be Justices of the Peace.

The number of those who conformed was very considerable, and we should be far from denying it. Martyrs are seldom other than a small minority, and that was an age of which fortitude was far from being a characteristic. Still Mr. Pocock is with us in judging that their conformity was outward only.

The apparent acquiescence of many was, perhaps, less due to an approval of the changes than to the hope they entertained that either they might be only temporary or that they might perhaps eventually be sanctioned by the Pope. Many gradually dropped off as such hopes began to appear illusory, and this in part accounts for the gradual increase of the Roman party all over the country.

This widespread refusal to conform and still more general dislike of the new doctrines caused great difficulty to the Crown and the Bishops. What had happened two centuries previously repeated itself, though without the same excuse. Then the Black

Death had almost denuded the country of its clergy, and necessitated the recruiting of their ranks by persons of no proper education or preparation. The Reformation itself was but the distant consequence of the evil. Now a still direr pestilence had passed over the country, and left the flock without shepherds to feed it. And those who had done the deed must needs have recourse again to the ranks of the uneducated and unprepared to supply their own conception of the shepherd's office. Grindal's experience at London, in the first ordination he held, is mentioned by Mr. Pocock as a typical case. "Few of his candidates had a University or any other education, most of these being tradesmen or mechanics of mature age, many being over forty, one of fifty, and another of sixty." And, again, we read :

In February, 1585, at an interview between the Queen in Council and some of the Bishops, Burleigh accused them of making many rude and unlearned ministers, instancing particularly Overton, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, who made seventy ministers in one day, some shoemakers and other craftsmen, to which the reply of the Bishop of Rochester was that if they would have none but learned ministers admitted, and he had himself never ordained more than three at once, better livings must be provided for them, and the Archbishop of Canterbury added that it was impossible for the realm to provide learned preachers enough for the thirteen thousand parishes. To this the Queen rejoined with an oath that what she wanted was not learned men, who were not to be found, but honest, sober, and wise men, and such as can read the Scriptures and homilies unto the people.

And yet after all "many churches were served by laymen : " for "the Bishops were at their wits' ends to find men to fill the vacant ones."

These clergy of the second order outran their superiors in their Protestant proclivities. The Bishops were Zwinglian. The clergy were Calvinistic.

Calvinism, which subsequently overran the whole Church, was the dominant creed even at the very beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. For though Elizabeth's first appointed Bishops were of the Zwinglian rather than of the Calvinistic school, the laity, as well as the majority of the clergy who had fallen in with the new learning, were for the most part Calvinists, the tenets of the French Reformer having already been extensively adopted, though their great development in the country belongs to a later date.

Calvinism was firmly enthroned at the Universities. Thus the Cambridge authorities in 1581, returning thanks to Beza, who had presented them the famous Codex D of the Bible, say: "We assure you that, saving the unique position which we recognize in Holy Scripture, there are no writers of any age whose works we esteem of higher value than those of that remarkable man, John Calvin, or your own." And at Oxford, in 1579, a statute was passed: "That the younger members of the University should be instructed either in Calvin's or in the Heidelberg Catechism, and that they should afterwards read the works of the Swiss divine, Bullinger, who had succeeded Zwingli as a teacher at Zurich, and the Institutes of Calvin." Another cause and witness of the prevalence of Calvinism was the popularity of the Geneva Bible—the *Breeches* Bible, as it is usually called. This was a translation made at Geneva by the English Calvinists "fortified with marginal notes, short and terse and much to the point, intermixed with a good deal of Calvinistic misinterpretation ;"

and "the form of belief fostered by these notes can scarcely be said to have expired till the present century, if indeed it does not still survive here and there among members of the Church of England." This version was hateful to the Queen, and also to Parker and the Bishops, who with an exception or two were Zwinglians. These tried to suppress it, but in vain. It was the version most used in churches, and one hundred and forty editions of it were printed before it was effectually suppressed a century later on by Laud. When Grindal, who had Calvinistic tendencies, succeeded Parker in the Primacy, this Genevan Bible began to be printed in England, and a Calvinistic Catechism of a pronounced character was inserted between the two Testaments.

We naturally inquire in what manner these new ministers, so uncultivated and fanatical, discharged their official duties, and what was the general effect on the religious worship of the country. Mr. Pocock meets our desires with several passages.

Pilkington, Bishop of Durham, had attributed the burning of St. Paul's Cathedral to a judgment of God on the "walkings, talkings, chidings, fightings which had been going on in the church, and that especially in time of Divine Service." And the same Bishop, not in the impassioned language of a sermon, but in a sober piece of writing, says:

"Come into a church the Sabbath day, and ye shall see but few, though there be a sermon, but the ale-house is ever full. Woe worth the Papist therefore, in this kingdom, for they be earnest, zealous, and painful in their doings. . . . A Popish summoner, spy, or promoter will drive more to a church with a word, to hear a Latin Mass, than seven preachers will bring in a week's preaching to



hear a godly sermon. O what a condemnation shall this be, to see the wicked so diligent and earnest in their doings to set up anti-Christ, and Christian rulers and officers of all sorts having the whip of correction in their hands by God's law, and the Princes have so coldly behaved themselves in setting up the kingdom of Christ, that neither they give good examples themselves in diligent praying, and resorting to the church, nor, by the whip of discipline, drive others thitherward."

This was in the earlier part of Elizabeth's reign. Later on we have a report sent to the Council by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners regarding the condition of the counties of Cheshire and Lancashire. They say that :

Small reformation has been made as may appear by the emptiness of the churches on Sundays and festivals, and the multitude of bastards and drunkards. Preachers are few ; most parsons unlearned, and those that are learned non-resident, divers unlearned persons being daily admitted by the Bishops to rich benefices. Many, even Justices and coroners, have never communicated for more than thirty years. The people so swarm in the streets and ale-houses during service-time that in many churches there is only the curate and the clerk, and open markets are kept during service-time. Cock-fights and other unlawful games are tolerated on Sunday during Divine Service, and Justices of the Peace and Ecclesiastical Commissioners are often present.

And a century later Mr. Pocock thus presents us with the picture of the state of affairs which Laud was endeavouring to remedy.

The account of the state of things which the Archbishop [Laud] set himself to remedy would simply be incredible were it not attested by hundreds of contemporary documents, which Protestant historians have found it convenient to pass over in silence, but which can no longer be ignored,

since they have been analyzed and their contents calendared in the volumes of State Papers issued under the authority of the Master of the Rolls.

From these documents it appears that the ordinary matins and evensong, the only service used on Sunday in the churches, was said by the minister, who, in most cases, wore no surplice and curtailed the prayers in various ways, to make room for the sermon, if indeed he did not omit them altogether. The congregation sat, the men wearing their hats or not, as it suited their convenience, the Communion-table, standing in the body of the church, being made the receptacle for such hats and clothes as were not worn, and frequently used as a seat by any one who was not accommodated with a pew. Sometimes a clergyman will defend his practice by alleging that he has not worn a surplice for thirty years; and it is plain that its disuse had been gradually increasing as the Puritan ministers succeeded to the places of such priests as had conformed at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. During the time that Laud had held the bishopric of London he had exerted all his influence to put down these irregularities, but he was sadly hampered by the class of Bishops with whom he had to deal, so great was their ignorance and worldliness. Wright, Bishop of Bristol, we must suppose was one of the better sort, for in 1632 Laud got him promoted to Lichfield and Coventry. Yet even he allowed the singing men of his Cathedral to act as if they were priests in laying hands on the clergy ordained by him, and he apologized to Archbishop Harsnet of York and Laud of London for having allowed this of very necessity, the Dean and Chapter not being available for the purpose.

And there were worse things even than these.

The Vicar-General of Lincoln says, in his Visitation of the diocese, September 19, 1634, that many Prebendaries had never seen the church, that ale-houses, hounds, and swine were kept in the churchyard very offensively: that at Louth the clergy and laity were much given to drunkenness, the goodly church of Boston much decayed, whilst at Huntingdon the vicar of Odell never used the surplice or

the sign of the Cross at Baptism, and at Alesbury the clergy performed clandestine marriages with gloves and masks on. Neither are these at all exceptional cases. Even as late as October, 1637, we find the churchwardens of the parish of Knotting, in Bedfordshire, charged before the Official Commissary of the Archdeacon with having allowed for the last three years cock-fighting to go on in the chancel of the church, the minister of the church, with his sons, being present and enjoying the sport.

When we read of all this we are prone to ask if Norwich did not deserve congratulations rather than condolences, when, as its new Bishop reported in 1635, "in all the thirty-two churches in the city of Norwich there was not one in which there was any morning service or sermon."

Religious decadence like this could hardly fail to bring moral decadence along with it, and this is the description which Mr. Pocock gives of the reign of Elizabeth :

And now the question may fairly be asked, What was the effect of this kind of teaching upon the nation at large, or at least, whether directly consequent or not upon the religious teaching in the churches, what was the general standard of religion and morality in the country? This question can be approximately answered by reference to contemporary sermons and diaries and the State Papers of the period. The account given by Bristowe in his *Motives to the Catholic Faith*, published in 1575, must of course be looked on with some suspicion. After enumerating the results of Calvinistic teaching of the last sixteen years, he says he need not refer to the testimonies of Luther and Erasmus, because the deterioration of morals was most evident in our own country :

"Never was less humility and charity, never more whoredom and perjury, so that nothing is to be looked for but universal destruction and utter desolation."

He concludes his account as follows :

“And of all most ill, most wicked, and therefore everywhere most despised, most scorned, the superintendents and ministers themselves, that if a book should be made of their several behaviours, as it would presently be confessed, so would it of posterity be scarcely believed.”

Some deduction has also to be made from the impassioned invectives of Protestant preachers such as the French convert John Veron, who says that he laments that many who were a match if they go to plain Scripture with any doctor of the Papist part, lived so abominably :

“Whoredom, drunkenness, and gluttony unto them is but sport and pastime. They backbite, they slander, they chide, and strive. Among them there is no modesty, no soberness, no temperancy. All deceit, all craft, all subtlety, and falsehood reigneth among them. Whereas if ye hear them dispute and reason of the Scriptures and Word of God, ye will think that they be very angels that be come down from Heaven. So godly they talk. So godly they speak.”

Such is the uniform testimony of the Reformers even in the reign of Edward VI. The witness given by Bradford, perhaps the most earnest and sincere of all the prominent members of the Protestant party, is too well known to need repetition here ; and the character of the man renders it entirely trustworthy. The State Papers of the reign of Elizabeth bear the same testimony. On February 18, 1560, Horne, Dean of Durham, complains of the licentious manners of the people. In 1561 Scory, Bishop of Hereford, writing to Cecil, says that his Cathedral is a very nursery of blasphemy, whoredom, pride, superstition, and ignorance. The scandal had reached the Archbishop's ears, for in the following year he and the Bishop of London petitioned Cecil to get the Queen to authorize the Bishop to hold a Visitation of the Cathedral from time to time, “Whereby that church shall be purged of many enormities and God's glory greatly advanced.” The Visitations, however, produced but little fruit, for twenty years later in a letter addressed to the Bishop the writer complains of the contrast between the listlessness of the service and the

disregard of the truth of the Gospel in his day, and the fervour of the frequent services and the zeal and devotion which he could himself remember in the dark days of Queen Mary.

In the same year Bishop Best of Carlisle reports the priests of his diocese to be wicked imps of anti-Christ, false and subtle; and three years later Bishop Pilkington of Durham gives a most lamentable account of the northern counties, the wickedness of which he attributes to the neglect of their dioceses by the Bishops of Chester and Man.

We have confined ourselves almost exclusively in this article to citations from Mr. Pocock. It would have been possible to confirm and supplement what he tells us from other sources, but, considering his high authority, it has seemed better to leave his statement as it stands, rather than to mix it up with facts, which, however true in themselves, might seem doubtful to an Anglican reader as coming from a suspected source.

Perhaps it may be pleaded in reply to this formidable indictment that the responsibility for the condition of things ought not to be laid exclusively on the backs of the Elizabethan clergy; that the same dissolution of morals and irreligious spirit had existed in the years immediately antecedent to the Reformation, and that such an Augean stable necessarily took a long time to cleanse.

We are far from denying that there was much demoralization to the earlier period referred to. On the contrary, we would trace to its existence the very possibility of the Reformation. Dom Gasquet, when commenting on the unsatisfactory condition of the clergy at the time when Henry VIII. began his evil

course, quotes very appropriately a passage from Bellarmine :

I declare that false teaching, heresy, the falling away of so many peoples and kingdoms from the true faith, in fine all the calamities, wars, tumults, and seditions of these distressing times, take their source from no other cause than because pastors, and the other priests of the Lord sought Christ, not for Christ's sake, but that they might eat His bread. For some years before the Lutheran and Calvinistic heresy, as those testify who were then living, there was in ecclesiastical judgments hardly any severity, in morals no discipline, in sacred learning no teaching, towards holy things no reverence. The renowned glory of the clergy and sacred orders had perished ; priests were despised, laughed at by the people, and lay under grave and constant infamy.<sup>1</sup>

But the Anglicanism of Elizabeth and her successors, instead of effecting any amelioration in the country, made things much worse than before. Mr. Pocock, in a passage quoted above, has referred in illustration of this to a letter written about 1583 or 1584, to Scory, from his cathedral city of Hereford, by one whose sympathies were all on the Protestant side. Dom Gasquet has introduced this letter into the first chapter of his book on Edward VI. and the Book of Common Prayer, and it is worth extracting :

Right honourable and reverend Father, my bounden duty always remembered. May it please your lordship to be advised or put in memory that in the dark days of Queen Mary the Dean then and clergy of your Cathedral Church of Hereford, did orderly observe their superstitious orders and were present thereat continually, except certain days of license which are called days of jubilee, and did preach their superstitious dregs not only but also did in their outward living keep great hospitality, for every night

<sup>1</sup> *Concio de Dom. Lætare.* Ap. Gasquet, *Monasteries*, i. p. 20.

at midnight they with the whole vicars choral would rise to Matins, and especially the domyday for the week being, would be first there at five o'clock in the morning, at St. Nicholas Mass, then at other Masses at certain altars, then at eight of the clock our Lady's Mass was solemnly said, then at nine the Prime and None, then the High Mass was in saying until it was eleven of the clock, besides every man must have said his own private Mass at some one altar or other daily. Then after dinner to evensong until five o'clock, in which time of service a number of tapers were burning every day and there was great incensing at the high altar daily to their idols and there was a lamp burning day and night continually before their gods, and every Sabbath-day and festival-days St. Thomas' bell should ring to procession, and then the Dean would send his somner to warn the mayor of the procession, and then upon the somner's warning the mayor would send the serjeants to the parish churches, every man in his ward to the aldermen, then the aldermen would cause the parish priest to command all the free men to attend on the mayor to the procession and sermon, or lecture (if) for want of a sermon there should be a lecture in the chapter-house every Sabbath and holy day notwithstanding they were at High Mass in the choir. So zealous and diligent were the temporality then in observing those dregs of the clergy. Then the Dean and clergy would come so orderly to church with such a godly show of humbleness and in keeping such hospitality that it did allure the people to what order they would request them. This is true for I did see and know it, but then did I as a child and knew not the truth and then such heavy burdens were but light, but now in these joyful days of light how heavy is it amongst a number of us to come two hours in the day to serve the true God, the everlasting King of all glory, but too lamentable to think on it, and much more grievous to him that did see the blind zeal in darkness so observed, and now in the true light and pathway to salvation neglected. Then were these tapers and lamps greatly plentiful with incensing to idols most costly even in the clearest day of summer, and now not scarce one little candle is allowed

or maintained to read a chapter in the dark evening in the choir. And as for resorting to hear the truth of the Gospel it is little regarded. I will not nor dare say in those that reap the fruits thereof, although I speak the truth, notwithstanding the visitation.

Had the change been from error to truth, it should have been attended with a marked improvement in religious fervour and morals: just as has invariably been the result when any Catholic reformers, like St. Francis and St. Dominic, or like St. Ignatius, have risen up and warred against the sinfulness of their age. Since the transition was from bad to much worse, and we have a direct causal connection between the increased evil and the "new learning," we can only apply the principle, "By their fruits you shall know them."

It would be unjust in itself and contrary to our own wishes not to notice the other side of Mr. Pocock's picture. The purpose of his articles is not merely to show up the state of religion under Elizabeth and James as quite unworthy of our sympathy, but to bring into prominence the work of Laud in effecting an improvement. It was then that High Church ideas were first originated, and it was natural that the attempt should be made to graft these on the organization which these strivers after better things found in existence among them. It was over this that Laud laboured during the thirty years of his episcopate, with success which Mr. Pocock judges considerable, and though the Rebellion cut short his life and interrupted his work, since Juxon and Sheldon, Gunning, Wren, and others who took it up again after the Restoration, were men of his forma-



tion, he may justly be credited with the paternity of their labours and results. In some sense also Mr. Pocock seems to be right in attributing to them "the late development (of the recovery at the Restoration) of which, after two hundred and thirty years of a wonderfully chequered history, we are in the present enjoyment of." That is to say, although the Anglican Church relapsed into its earlier condition of religious apathy and neglect, and had its fits of Puritan revivalism, till close on our own times, and although, on the other hand, the ideas now in favour with the High Church party go far beyond any that can be found in the works of the Caroline divines, still the ideas generated under Laud and his more immediate successors have persisted, and have been among the true causes of the modern movement.

We have said that we have no wish to ignore this Laudian reformation, but rather every wish to view it sympathetically. It was a movement towards, not away from, Catholic truth as we understand it; and it has always seemed to us a matter for great regret that High Churchmen should regard us, rather than the Puritan party, as the objects of their special doctrinal antipathy; and matter for still greater regret that Catholics should have reacted on this hostility of certain Anglicans towards them by employing bitter language and indulging at times (at times only) in harsh feelings. There is no doubt that men like Dr. Littledale in the past, and a few others who might be named in the present, by their gross unfairness and manifest insincerity are responsible for a great deal of this irritation among us. But

why must we take these men as typical of the entire party? Cannot we remember other names besides theirs, and do we not often meet in private life with Anglicans who are equally conspicuous for their fairness and friendliness? If there is a *Church Times* with a gallery that it can play to, is there not also a *Guardian*, which is always fair and courteous? And if we thus admonish ourselves, may we not appeal also to all truth-loving Anglicans to meet us in the same spirit? It is at all events in this spirit that we invite attention to Mr. Pocock's picture of the religious collapse under Elizabeth and James; that is to say, not in the way of exultation over the discomfiture of an Anglican illusion, but rather in the way of hope that a better understanding between us may be promoted. Modern High Churchmen, unless they go out of their way for the purpose, are not committed to the defence of all this revolting lawlessness which Mr. Pocock describes. They are quite entitled to detest it all as a deplorable calamity, and to attach themselves in preference to the real amelioration dating from Laud. But then it follows that the movement to which they belong represents not a departure from the Catholic ideal, as it is understood by all others save themselves, but an approximation towards it. And if it is such, is it not becoming that, like many of the older Tractarians, they should regard us not as their special foes, but rather as persons with whose religious position they can have more sympathy than with any other?

They complain, we know, of our exclusiveness as being so uncharitable, and ask how it is possible to sympathize with a position which meets you only

with uncharitableness. There is something plausible in this way of stating the case, and perhaps it is not surprising that minds should be captivated by it. But we would ask any Anglican reader of these pages to reflect whether after all to be exclusive in the matter of religious belief is necessarily to be uncharitable. The Anglican conception of the Catholic Church considerably enlarges its borders, but are not Anglicans quite as exclusive as ourselves in their attitude towards those who lie outside the Church as they conceive it? And yet, do they feel themselves to be uncharitable in this exclusiveness, and not rather to be showing the truest charity when they exhort Dissenters to give a candid hearing to their arguments, and hope to gather them into their communion? Now, this is just our position towards all others, Anglicans included. We have confidence in the truth of our position, which involves that momentous benefits to the human race are to be found only in communion with the Holy See: and we accordingly are impelled to lay the grounds of our conviction before our brethren without and beseech them to give a candid hearing. It is charity which impels us, not any wretched party feeling: the desire that friends should share the good things of truth along with us, not that we should score a triumph over adversaries. Is there anything unsympathetic in an attitude like this?

And if there is nothing in our personal bearing to repel friendliness, may we not recur to our former point and suggest that the moral of such a lesson as Mr. Pocock has to teach us is to attract a candid and sympathetic attention to the claims of our position?

The High Church movement, from its commencement under Laud, has been a progressive abandonment of the Protestant creed and return to that of the Catholic Church. Then why such hostility to the articles of that creed which still remain ungrasped, and towards the communion in which they find their fullest realization? Would it not at least be desirable to give them a fair study, and to seek help in understanding them from those who are able to give it, rather than from those who have a direct interest in misrepresentation?

## St. Bartholomew's Day, 1572.

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BY THE REV. W. LOUGHNAN, S.J.

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A wicked day, and not a holiday !

(*King John*, Act iii. Sc. 1.)

ONLY fanaticism of the venerable and antique type which in quite recent times howled down a gentleman of acknowledged culture and integrity at the Guildhall, because it fancied it saw behind the civic chair of a Catholic Lord Mayor visions of racks, thumb-screws, and the lurid light of the Smithfield fires, is any longer equal to the assertion, often made and never yet retracted, that not content with butchering the Huguenots by thousands on St. Bartholomew's day, in the year of grace 1572, Catholics continue down to this very hour to defend and applaud the massacre, nay, even to keep the anniversary as a day of high celebration. With bigotry of this ignorant sort disclaimer and argument are alike unavailing ; we can but once again enter our indignant protest against the charge, and, that done, contentedly leave the vindication of our character to time and that innate sense of justice and love of fair play which sooner or later bring Englishmen round to more equitable judgments about us. In the meantime, there is comfort in the knowledge that all do not think quite so evilly of us, that there are not a few, who if they cannot throw off their prepossessions so

thoroughly as to give us a plenary absolution for all our sins in the past, and in particular for our complicity in the St. Bartholomew Massacre, are yet glad to believe that we are now at the eleventh hour not only heartily sorry for, but thoroughly ashamed of, our misconduct.

So far so good. Mercies, however small, ought to be acceptable to those who, in the matter I am about to discuss, have not been used to much fair or kind treatment. But we are not satisfied with this half-loaf pittance of charity. We want the whole loaf; we do not ask for mercy, we demand justice. Anything short of justice, of a full acquittal from the guilt of the St. Bartholomew Massacre, is in our eyes as bad as no bread at all. Either we are guilty or not guilty; if the former, let us be straightway condemned without the benefit of extenuating circumstances; if the latter, let us have an immediate discharge. We plead Not Guilty; that we are no more to blame for the massacre, than we are responsible for the latest colliery or railway accident, that we come into court with absolutely clean hands, and that no verdict will satisfy us short of an explicit declaration that we leave it without a stain upon our character.

The history of mankind contains many a page as darkly stained with blood as that which records the St. Bartholomew Massacre. Why is the page turned down and the book kept perpetually open, ready for reference, at this most sorrowful chapter? Why is this atrocious deed remembered, when other slaughterings quite as wanton and cruel, the September massacres in Paris, for example, or the fusillades at Lyons, or the drownings at Nantes at

the close of last century, are, if not quite forgotten, at any rate seldom cast up as a reproach in the face of the French people? The reason of the difference is obvious. The St. Bartholomew has been saved from oblivion, is still flourished defiantly in our eyes, still "bewept to many simple gulls" even in our day, for this reason and for no other, that in the popular Protestant judgment it tells as few other historical facts tell against the Catholic Church. In that judgment the hideous deed of blood was the outcome of a plot, long premeditated and carefully arranged, a conspiracy to which a couple of Popes were accessories, the one *before* and the other *after* the fact, for the extermination of Protestantism in France, over which, when it had been consummated in rivers of blood, Rome, and with Rome all the Catholic world, rejoiced as for a great triumph of truth over heresy. This, succinctly, is the Protestant tradition, carefully nursed and industriously transmitted from age to age, which has come to be accepted by the non-Catholic world as the undeniable truth about the massacre. Is it any wonder that Protestant controversialists find in it one of their readiest weapons of offence against us, that they are slow to forget it themselves or suffer us to forget it? For if only the story they tell be the true story, our character is irretrievably gone.

Fortunately modern criticism has done a great deal to throw light on this dark subject by means of fresh diplomatic documents unearthed from the archives of Rome, France, Spain, Venice, and Belgium, which, if they do not unravel all the tangle of this intricate question, are amply sufficient to put three

things beyond all doubt. First, that the massacre was inspired by political, not religious motives; secondly, that the slaughter was not a matter of long, but of comparatively very short premeditation, if it was not actually a sudden impulse of wickedness; and thirdly, that the Church and the Holy See are in no way responsible for, or accomplices in, this most execrable deed. These three questions are so closely connected, that in answering one we are to some extent answering the others. For clearness' sake it will perhaps be best to take them separately and in the order in which I have just stated them.

The St. Bartholomew Massacre was a great crime committed by persons professing the Catholic faith. The guilt of it belongs to Charles IX. and his mother, with their councillors, and to no one else besides, except the actual executioners. We have the shame and the grief of confessing that the perpetrators of what the *Times* once called "the greatest crime, save one, ever committed," were, or rather ought to have been, Catholics—and that is all. To this extent, and to this extent only, has religion anything whatever to do with it. For nobody who is at all familiar with the history of Charles IX. and Catherine de' Medici can for a moment suppose that the massacre was wrought for any but political motives. So far was religion from being at the bottom of the mischief, that in the then state of men's minds nothing but religion could have prevented it. It is the absence, not the presence of religious motive, which is to blame. Apply a simple test to this assertion. Imagine for the nonce a very different set of characters and circumstances. Clear away the net



of intrigue which entangled the Court of Charles IX., sweep it clean of the moral filth with which it reeked, fancy it governed by the principles of the Gospel, set Blanche of Castille and St. Louis on the French throne in the room of Catherine and Charles, and we may be as certain as we are of our own existence, that there would have been no cold-blooded murder done upon the Huguenots, no St. Bartholomew's Massacre at all. The truth is, there was as little real religion amongst the slayers as amongst the slain.

Of the two principal actors in the dismal tragedy, Charles IX. may be treated almost as a *quantité négligeable*. A poor creature at the best, of sickly body and stunted mind, knowing only in vice, he took his cue from his mother and went blindly by her direction. With her the case is very different. To charge her, whom the late Louis Veuillot once aptly described as *moins reine qu' Euménide*, with zeal for religion in dooming the Huguenots to slaughter is about as reasonable as to impute the same exalted motive to little M. Thiers, when he shot his Communards down in the streets of Paris or on the plain of Satory. In name a Catholic, in manners a pagan, a freethinker of the school of Machiavelli with a leaning to the occult sciences, caring nothing for religion and everything for power ready to use Calvinism, which she hated and despised, when it served her purpose, and no less ready, when it stood in her way, to trample it under her feet, she had as much love and reverence for the Vicar of Christ as her royal sister Elizabeth over the way. Like Henry VIII. she was quite willing to put the gold of the Church into her pocket and the Triple Crown

itself on her head, but she had not the least idea of placing her purse, or her sceptre, or her head at the disposal of the Admiral of Châtillon. She was perfectly prepared to wreck the old faith of France by connivance with heresy, but not to risk the monarchy or her own hold of power by compromising overmuch with faction and rebellion.<sup>1</sup> She had come to terms more than once with the Huguenots, but seeing in the end that the bargain would not hold, because, its patience exhausted, France would no longer ratify it, she fell back like the Italian she was on the resources of her native cunning, and unable to subdue her enemies in the open day adopted the plan of assassinating them treacherously in the darkness of night. Zeal for religion had so little place in the calculations of this false woman, that, when in the secret council held immediately before the massacre she urged her wretched son to adopt her plan of midnight murder, she never once invoked the name of religion, but exhorted him to rid himself at one blow of enemies who had never shown the least respect either for his person or for his authority.<sup>2</sup> Zeal for religion, therefore, was not the motive of the massacre—this will appear still more clearly as we proceed—it had no hand at all in the deadly work; in the words of the canny Scot, who could not see any necessary connection between the religiousness of a town and the number of its churches and chapels:

<sup>1</sup> "Il re e la madre, come V.S. sa, erano venuti a tale, che si dubbitava, se fossero heretici. Ed io da fanciullo ho sentito pubblicamente nominare la Regina fomentatrice d'heresie." (*Vatican Arch. Arm.* 64, vol. 31; Copia d'una lettera del Padre Panigarola, da Parigi, 26 Agosto, 1572. See *Zeitschrift f. Geschwsh.* Jahrgang, 1892. Erstes Heft, in note p. 110.)

<sup>2</sup> Bossuet, *Abrégé de l'Hist. de France; Règne de Charles IX.*

"It was no religious zeal ava', but just cursedness of temper." It was a hellish deed conceived in the crafty brain of Catherine, begotten in great measure of her jealousy of Coligny, and wrought in the unrestrained fury of passion by a people burning to deal a final blow of summary vengeance on its hated enemy.

If the Court, then, is not open to the imputation of an excessive zeal for religion, can as much be said, it may be asked, for the French clergy in general, who, as H. Martin, Soldan, Dargaud, and other non-Catholic writers would have us believe, in many places actually encouraged the assassins in their bloody work, and when it was done went and gave solemn thanks to God in His churches for its success?

Baseless allegations of this sweeping kind are a manifest invention of the enemy, of writers notoriously hostile to the Catholic religion, whose malignant attempt to connect the illustrious Church of France with deeds of perfidious cruelty, such as the St. Bartholomew Massacre, has not the faintest chance of success except by the deliberate perversion or the dishonest suppression of historical facts. It is remarkable how rarely we come upon the name of any ecclesiastic in the history of the massacre, and how when we do encounter bishop or priest it is only to find them, as might have been expected, taking a firm stand on the side of humanity. Nothing is more certain than that the French clergy, as a body, with few if any exceptions, were not only innocent of all participation in the crime of Charles IX., but that in many instances they successfully opposed it, often

at the risk of their lives, and that, when not deceived as to its true character, they sternly condemned it. No bishop and no priest was present at the deliberations in which the massacre was decreed. Cut-throat clerics with a crucifix in one hand and a dagger in the other are no doubt effective enough figures on the stage, and would be more thrilling still if they were only more real, historical and not merely melodramatic personages. The Cardinal of Lorraine, in particular, who is sometimes depicted busy in Paris blessing poniards to be presently plunged in the palpitating hearts of recreant Huguenots, was away all this time in Rome, whither he had gone for the Conclave which elected Pope Gregory XIII. as successor to St. Pius V.

So far from countenancing the slaughter, the prelates and clergy of France, animated by the true spirit of Christ, were not seldom the defenders of the hunted Huguenots, screening them against the civil authorities and rescuing them from the hands of the populace, whose fury these same fanatics had done so much during long years of the most lawless and abominable excesses to bring down upon themselves in overwhelming retribution. At Lisieux, as all the world knows, the noble-hearted Bishop, Jean Hennuyer, saved a considerable number of Protestants from the hands of the infuriate people over whom the civil authorities had lost all control. At Toulouse the convents and monasteries took a glorious revenge for numberless past outrages on monk and nun by opening their doors and giving shelter to the persecuted Protestants. At Lyons the Archbishop received more than three hundred of

them into his own palace, which the angry mob assailed and stormed to tear from his arms the victims his charity had in vain sought to protect. At Nantes and Montpellier the clergy were more successful, staying the massacre and saving the lives of great numbers whom they hid away in their houses till the danger was over. At Nîmes, which had been the scene of two of the most cold-blooded among their many atrocious massacres, the lives of numerous Huguenots were saved by the energetic interference of the clergy. In the words of Fleury, who does not usually sin by excessive praise: "The clergy in spite of all the ill-usage they had received from the heretics saved as many of them as they could in various places."<sup>1</sup> The clergy of Paris, it is true, threw open their churches and held services of thanksgiving as for a national deliverance, but they did so, because in company with the rest of the French people, the Pope, and many foreign Courts, they were deceived by Charles' declarations made before the Parliament of Paris and repeated in subsequent statements to all Europe, and were led to believe in the discovery of a Huguenot plot for the murder of the King, with all his Court, and for the overthrow of the Government, a conspiracy in which clemency or delay would have been fatal to the Church, the monarchy, and society.

In a word, if we except the cases in which heresy was only a cloak for rebellion or in which principles were propagated alike fatal to human society and subversive of religion and morality, there is no authentic evidence on record to attest that the action of the

<sup>1</sup> Fleury, tom. xxxv. c. xxxix. p. 170; Caveirac, tom. vii. p. 480.

civil power in putting heretics to death was ever approved by the Church in any country; that she could ever wittingly and deliberately lend her sanction to cold-blooded treachery and murder will be maintained only by that species of obstinate prejudice with which any attempt at argument is sheer waste of time.

Let us pass on to the vexed question, whether the massacre was or was not a matter of long premeditation. Down to the present century historians seem to have been about equally divided on the point. Non-Catholic writers who accused the Pope of a guilty knowledge of the crime felt the need of some such theory; for if it arose out of circumstances immediately preceding its perpetration, the Holy See could have had no knowledge of it. The controversy has in our day been finally set at rest by the comparatively recent discovery and publication of manuscripts from the diplomatic correspondence of the sixteenth century, and in particular of the secret despatches written by Salviati, the Papal Nuncio at Paris, to the Cardinal Secretary at Rome for the information of the Sovereign Pontiff. The premeditation theory is now, therefore, universally rejected by writers of any name, who have made this subject a special study, such as Chateaubriand, who discovered the Salviati cypher, Soldan, Ranke, Lingard, H. Martin, Alzog, and others.<sup>1</sup> This theory long rested on a supposed secret treaty, alleged to have been concluded between France and Spain, in 1567, that is, five full years before the massacre, for the total extirpation of the Protestant religion. How,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. C. Cantu (French translation), vol. xv. Notes Additionnelles, F; Theiner, *Annales*, i. 42; Ranke, *Civil Wars*, &c. vol. ii. ch. i.

we might stop to inquire, how did this terrible secret come to be so thoroughly well kept—particularly amongst a people like the French, who, as Prosper Mérimée observes, are fond to excess of taking the world into their confidence—that the existence of the treaty has always been, at its best, so difficult of proof? Amongst ourselves Hallam<sup>1</sup> gives no credit to this league, as printed in Strype (i. 502), “which seems,” he says, “to have been fabricated by some of the Queen’s [Elizabeth’s] emissaries.” But let me first tell the story of the massacre, and comment on it afterwards.

The treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye, concluded in August, 1570, had sent a thrill of shame and rage through the length and breadth of France. And no wonder, since it robbed the victorious Catholics of all the advantages which they had won at the price of their best blood shed on the fields of Jarnac and Moncontour, to hand them over to the hated and vanquished Huguenots, by giving the latter uncontrolled freedom of worship, removing their political disabilities, and, as security for the future, putting or leaving them in possession of the four important fortified cities of La Rochelle, Montauban, Cognac, and La Charité. The star of the Huguenots was again in the ascendant. Coligny, who had been degraded from his high office of Admiral and outlawed by the Parliament of Paris in 1569, was received into favour, invited to Court, and even admitted into the King’s counsels. The effect of his newly acquired influence was soon apparent in the espousal by the King of the Protestant side in

<sup>1</sup> *Const. Hist.* vol. i. ch. iii. p. 185.

European politics, in the betrothal of his sister Margaret to the young Huguenot King of Navarre, in the secret treaty entered into with England for religious no less than for political purposes,<sup>1</sup> and, above all, in the underhand support extended to the Protestant rebels in the Low Countries. Emboldened by the success of his schemes, Coligny at last took the step which led ultimately to his own assassination and the massacre which followed it, when on the defeat of the Huguenot de Genlis by the Duke of Alva at Mons (June 11, 1572), he strove to push the King into an open rupture with Spain by a formal declaration of war. For the eyes of the Queen-mother were by this time open to the alarming fact, that the influence she had exercised over her son from his cradle was passing to another, and with it her control of State affairs. It was no longer her will or her son's, but the imperious will of Coligny that dictated the foreign and domestic policy of France. She was wounded at once in her maternal instincts, which were strong, and in her ruling passion, love of power, which was stronger still. Of open hostilities with Spain she would not hear until secure of the support of England, and that was more than problematical. But if the war was to be prevented, something must be done, and done quickly. At the meeting with her son in the famous Council of Montpipeau (August 10, 1572) she plied him on her knees with tears, threats, and entreaties, not altogether without effect. The King promised obedience, but, weak and irresolute as usual, soon fell again under the domination of Coligny.

<sup>1</sup> Calendar of State Papers (*Foreign*), 1572, nn. 262, 272.



In Catherine's mind the hour was come to strike a blow which should be decisive of her ascendancy, To that ascendancy Coligny was the principal obstacle. It seems clear that the Queen's abandonment of her policy of conciliation dates from the interview at Montpipeau, and as little doubtful that she formed there and then her project for the assassination of Coligny. Coligny killed, the King would be once again manageable. The Huguenots would probably fly to arms to avenge his death, a little blood-letting, and the catastrophe might be explained to the world as the final act in the civil war. Accordingly, in the morning of August 22nd, Coligny was fired upon by a hired assassin as he was returning from a visit to the King. The wounds inflicted, though serious, were not mortal. The first blow had failed ; it must now be repeated, if only in self-defence. Terrified by her consciousness of guilt and the defiant attitude of the Huguenots clamouring for vengeance, Catherine threw shame and irresolution to the winds.<sup>1</sup> In a secret council held at the palace and composed of the King, Anjou, Guise, and others, she at last overcame the scruples of her son and persuaded him to anticipate the bloody and traitorous designs, attributed to the friends of the Admiral, in the massacre that followed.<sup>2</sup> Coligny was the first to perish at the hands of a party headed by the Duke of Guise in circumstances of peculiar horror and indignity. Then at the first sound of the tocsin, the preconcerted signal, the people of Paris, already for days excited to fever-

<sup>1</sup> Salviati to the Cardinal of Como, September 2nd and 22nd, apud Theiner, *Annales*, vol. i. Mant. Doc. p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> Lingard, *Hist. of England*, viii. ii. p. 96 ; Theiner, *Annales*, vol. i. pp. 328, seq.

point by the presence and arrogant bearing of the hated Huguenots in their midst,<sup>1</sup> were let loose to work their wicked will, and, their passions inflamed by the memory of a thousand wrongs, they fell to work of slaughter in house and street and lane with a frenzy of rage and a thirst for blood not to be satiated till the very gutters ran and the waters of the Seine were red with it.

The bloody drama enacted in the streets of Paris was played over again, as we have already seen, in the towns and cities of the provinces, principally in those which had suffered the most cruelly in times past at the hands of the Huguenots; with this difference, however, that whereas in the capital the murders were sanctioned by authority, in the provinces they were generally the effect of popular passion, which the civil governors had not always the power, when they had the will, to control.<sup>2</sup> As to the total number of the slain, it is quite impossible to form an accurate opinion, since the statements of historians on this head are most conflicting, and fluctuate between the two extremes of 1,000 and 100,000. Mr. Froude,<sup>3</sup> whilst giving in the text the latter figure as the number of persons believed at the time to have perished, has the fairness to add, in a foot-note, that in all large numbers, when unsupported by exact statistics, it is safe to divide

<sup>1</sup> Previous Edicts of Pacification had expressly stipulated, that the King's "good city of Paris" was never to be offended by the presence of the obnoxious Huguenot. The leaders of the party with hundreds of their followers had flocked into Paris on this occasion for the celebration of the marriage of Henry of Navarre with Margaret of Valois.

<sup>2</sup> Lingard, loc. cit.; *Revue des Quest. Hist.* vol. i. pp. 330—348.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of England*, vol. x. c. xxiii. p. 408.

at least by ten. Even so, ten thousand is probably a gross exaggeration, since with all the pains they may be presumed to have taken to arrive at the correct number, the Calvinists failed to identify by name more than about eight hundred victims for insertion in the pages of their Martyrology.<sup>1</sup>

This in substance is the story of the massacre. It is difficult to understand how writers who allow Catherine to have been one of the shrewdest political heads of her time, can in the same breath contend that the massacre was a plot deeply laid and long premeditated ; for surely never was crime of such magnitude, the results of which were to be so far-reaching and so lasting, more clumsily executed. Not only did the contrivers of the alleged plot take no means to secure success, they on the contrary did all in their power to ensure failure. They seem even to have gone out of their way to give the Huguenots timely warning of the storm that was brewing. Instead of so arranging matters that the massacre should take place simultaneously on the same day all over the kingdom, as Assuerus of old had ordered the slaughter of the Jewish people, we are told that the first orders of the King for its execution were issued on the 28th of August, four days after St. Bartholomew's day, a delay which would allow plenty of time for the news of the massacre at Paris to precede the King's despatches and give the alarm to the threatened Huguenots. In fact, the murders in the provinces were the work not of a single day, but of whole weeks, the frenzy

<sup>1</sup> *Martyrologe des Calvinistes*, printed in 1582, and quoted by M. Ch. Barthélemy, *Mensonges Historiques*, 1ère série, p. 220.

of killing spreading from town to town like the ravages of the influenza or the cholera in our own time.<sup>1</sup> Again, what surer way to defeat the plan by alarming the enemy and putting him on his guard, than the attempt on Coligny's life two days before the general massacre? What could the astute Catherine have been dreaming about to jeopardize the entire enterprise, for the sake of anticipating the death of her enemy by two short days? In the hypothesis, then, of a premeditated plot, the measures for its successful execution were from first to last so ill-taken that the massacre was not only not the final act in the war, but on the contrary the signal for a fresh outbreak of civil strife a few weeks later. With a fatality, therefore, which so often waits on wickedness, the crime was a useless and a barren crime. The Catholics were eventually the losers and their victims the only gainers by it, since it has affixed an indelible stigma to the Catholic name, and by the feelings of pity it has evoked in men's minds for the sufferings of the Huguenots, has helped the world to forget, if not to condone, the misdeeds which brought down at last so terrible a retribution on their heads.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The massacres took place at Meaux, August 25; at La Charité, August 27; at Saumur and Angers, August 29; at Lyons, August 30; at Troyes, September 2; at Bourges, September 15; at Rouen, September 17; at Romans, September 20; at Toulouse, September 23; at Bordeaux, October 3; at Poitiers, October 27.

<sup>2</sup> A Nemesis seems to have dogged the steps of the chief actors in the massacre. Charles IX. never held up his head after it, and died two years later. The Duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry III., was assassinated, while still under the ban of excommunication for his murder of the Cardinal of Guise, by Jacques Clément, in 1589. The Duke of Guise was savagely murdered when as head of the Ligue he was playing in Paris the traitorous part formerly played by Coligny as chief of the Huguenot faction. Coligny was done to death by

But there remains still to be considered the most serious charge of all, the alleged complicity of the Holy See in the massacre.

"What judgment," asked the *Times* no longer ago than September 5, 1892, "are we to form about the Pope who gave his approval to the St. Bartholomew Massacre, and who is now ranked among the canonized saints of his Church?" Is this really the voice of our leading journal, or is it only a familiar echo from Exeter Hall? What judgment are we to form? Why, what judgment can any reasonable being form save only this, that so surely as Pius V. is a canonized Saint of his Church—for the poisoned shaft is aimed at him—so surely did he never, no, never, give his approval to the St. Bartholomew Massacre. A man may not believe in the saints, nor in the invocation of the saints, but if he is a man with a grain of sense, he must admit that there is not on God's earth a more irrefragable testimony to character than that which is furnished by canonization. Hatred of Catholicism to be effective should be seasoned with just a spice of sense, and what man of sense, let him hate the Church with ever so "perfect a hatred," will go the length of affirming that she canonizes the accomplices of murder? Yes, Pius V., in whose elevation to the Chair of St. Peter men, such as St. Charles Borromeo and St. Philip Neri, saw a special intervention of Providence, is

order of Charles IX. ; Guise by that of Henry III. Guise spurned the corpse of Coligny with his foot ; Henry III. kicked that of Guise in the face. Catherine de' Medici died neglected in January, 1589. "Elle n'eut pas plus tôt rendu le dernier soupir, qu'on n'en fit pas plus de compte que d'une chèvre morte." (*L'Estoile*. Cf. Chateaubriand, *Études ou Discours Historiques*, vol. iv. pp. 297, seq.)

a canonized Saint, whom the Church of God invokes and holds up to the veneration of her children, and in whose honour she offers to God the great sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. The fact, therefore, though only indirect, is yet absolutely conclusive evidence, that the charge of complicity in the St. Bartholomew Massacre, laid at his door by the enemies of Catholicism, is as nonsensical as it is blasphemous.

But this is by no means all. Two things at the outset are perfectly plain : first, that if the Pope had any hand in this most atrocious crime, his complicity must be that of the accessory before the fact, for Pius had been in Heaven nearly four months when the massacre took place ; and secondly, that if he gave his approval to it, he must have had some previous knowledge of it, since not even an infallible Pope can sanction that of which he has no knowledge. But what knowledge could Pius have had of a crime, which the very perpetrators, as we have seen and is now generally admitted, had not even imagined till a very few days, a couple of weeks at the most, before its actual commission ? An ingenious attempt to solve the problem has been made by Canon Jenkins, who in a letter printed in the *Times* of September 2, 1892, lays it down peremptorily that "the urgent letters of this sanguinary Pope to the King and Queen of France led on to the Massacre of St. Bartholomew." Here at any rate we have a distinct and definite charge. It was the letters of St. Pius V. which wrought the mischief.

Now in the matter of these letters we must be careful to keep closely to the high-road, the point

in debate, and not allow ourselves to be led off into the by-lanes of side issues. The question is, therefore, not whether these "urgent" letters were urgent for a policy of greater or less severity against the Huguenots, but whether they were urgent with an intent or an utter recklessness of the consequences of his words, which lays their writer open to the serious charge of complicity in one of the most atrocious deeds of treachery and murder on record.

The policy advocated by St. Pius towards the Huguenots, as revealed in his correspondence with Charles IX. and the Queen-mother,<sup>1</sup> is undoubtedly a policy of stern but just, and it may be added, necessary severity. The world in these days may disapprove of the policy and condemn it as unwise. All that, as we have said, is beside the present question, which is whether a man may not urge another to adopt for self-preservation measures of severity against his assailants without laying himself open to the charge of inciting to deeds of lawless violence. Now the Pope's policy was the very opposite of the policy pursued by Charles and his mother, which had done so much to aggravate the religious troubles of France by constantly allowing the Huguenots to play fast and loose with their engagements, when a little determination would have put an end once for all to their career of slaughter, sacrilege, and devastation. Pius, therefore, on his accession to the Pontifical throne, in 1566, lost no time in urging the young King of France to take effectual measures for the suppression of these

<sup>1</sup> *Apostolicarum Pii Quinti, Pont. Max. Epistolarum Libri Quinque*, &c. Editi operâ et curâ Francisci Goubau. Antwerpæ, 1640.

obstinately rebellious heretics. His sentence is for an open, vigorous, uncompromising prosecution of the war until all rebellion is completely trampled out. The Pope is moreover perfectly frank and above-board, speaking his mind, not as conspirators and evil counsellors do, in secret corners or under his breath, and with his hand to his mouth, but straightforwardly by public formal Brief, for all the world to see and read and understand. He even sent money and a little army to the help of the King, which covered itself with glory on the fields of Jarnac and Moncontour. Protestants remember only that the Huguenots were heretics; in the eyes of Pius they were rebels also—the two epithets are constantly coupled together in his letters—brigands by land and pirates on sea, restless, insatiable, implacable, and with men such as these he urges the King, again and again, to wage war to the knife, never to come to terms, never to give them any peace until the rebellion has been crushed out of the land. He goes further, he threatens the King with the judgments of God for neglect of his duty to the Church and his own subjects by his criminal tolerance of rebellious heretics, even to the loss of his crown if, like Saul sparing the Amalekites, he spares those who spare neither God nor man. Language strong as this, it may be urged, is a direct incitement to a war of extermination. If so, it is at any rate war, not massacre nor murder, war carried on by soldiers lawfully enrolled and fighting according to the laws of civilized warfare, not waged by cut-throats and assassins, which the Pope is advocating for the extermination of a most savage and relentless rebellion.



But, it may be further argued, that not in the course of the war alone, but even when the heat of battle is passed and the blood has cooled down again, is the King exhorted to show himself merciless to his rebellious subjects. Well, but is mercy to the guilty never an injustice to the innocent? And how, pray, had the Huguenots profited by former leniency if not to commit fresh offences? If unbelief or heresy culminates in persistent overt treason, it finds no mercy under any Government worthy of the name, and it must be remembered that whenever the Pope urges the punishment of persistently rebellious and obdurate heretics, even to the infliction of the death penalty, which may be implied but is nowhere explicitly mentioned in the letters, he has always the legal forms of justice in his mind, often on his lips in such expressions as *justis pœnis, justisque suppliciis quæ legibus statuta sunt; adjuvare ut justitiæ et legibus locus sit.* (April 13 and 26, 1569.) The law which punishes treason with death is to be found on the records of all civilized nations and in extreme cases, such as this of which the Pope is speaking, there is often no alternative but to remove the traitor from the body politic, as you remove a cancer by the knife, mawkish sentimentality notwithstanding. If it be argued, as Canon Jenkins' letter seems to argue, that letters so "urgent," and they are very urgent, could only result in murder and massacre, I answer that it would be as reasonable to argue, that because the English law visits murder with the death penalty, the press may not, in given circumstances and for good reasons, urge the Executive to a rigorous enforcement of the law without incurring the guilt

of inciting the community to inflict lynch-law on reputed murderers.

The enemies of Pius have even gone the length of asserting that he forbade the giving of quarter, and ordered all rebels taken in battle to be killed out of hand. The assertion is unsupported by a tittle of evidence. But even if true, is the slaying of rebels taken in arms never anything but unjust and unlawful slaying, that is, murder? Is such a summary and severe measure never justifiable homicide? Was it murder in the suppression of the Commune to shoot down men caught *in flagranti*, with the stain of powder on their hands and the mark of the kick of the rifle on their shoulders? And, oh, how tender our conscience when we fancy we have caught a Pope tripping, how little squeamish about our own hard dealings with rebels! Why, the cry for vengeance on the rebel Sepoys still shrills through the air, though it is now more than thirty years since it went up from the Protestant press and pulpits of England. "No nation," wrote the *Saturday Review*,<sup>1</sup> "was ever so irresistibly called to vengeance, and the call will be readily answered." "The mercy which Alva showed in the Netherlands must be all that we know for the present."<sup>2</sup> "It is one consolation, after all we have suffered, that Englishmen now know a little too much about their 'Hindoo fellow-subjects' to be spoony about them. When the country is resettled, the measures adopted will not be tinged with any misbegotten sentimentality."<sup>3</sup>

Quotations of this grim kind might be multiplied almost indefinitely. But enough. Is there not, perhaps,

<sup>1</sup> January 2, 1858.

<sup>2</sup> July 25, 1857.

<sup>3</sup> September 5, 1857.

after all some little mistake about this hideous charge brought against the Holy See of complicity in political murder? Has it really been left at the right door? Ought it not to have been taken over the way? Has the Canon who bears so heavily on St. Pius V., never heard of a certain address in which the Archbishops and Bishops of the Anglican Establishment were very "urgent" with the "sanguinary" Head of their Church in September of this same year 1572, for the death of Mary Stuart? How "urgent" they were will appear from the following abridgment of their arguments as given by Mr. Froude<sup>1</sup> from a MS. endorsed in the hand of Burghley, arguments which, we are told, are mainly theological. "Magistrates," they said, "are instituted by God for the suppression of wickednesses; Mary Stuart was wicked, and the Queen would therefore offend in conscience if she did not punish her. Whether the late Queen of Scots was Queen or subject, stranger or citizen, kin or not kin, by God's word she deserved to suffer, and that in the highest degree. Saul spared Agag, because he was a king, and for that fault God took the kingdom from Saul. . . . Those who seduced the people of God into idolatry were to be slain: there was an express order that no pity should be shown them. . . . If Mary was allowed to escape, God's wrath would surely light on the prince who spared her. . . . To show pity to an enemy, a stranger, a professed enemy of Christ, convicted of so many heinous crimes . . . might justly be termed *crudelis misericordia*." "So spoke," concludes Mr. Froude, "the English Bishops, conveying, in the language of the day, the

<sup>1</sup> *History of England*, vol. x. chap. xxii. pp. 360, 361

conviction of the soundest understandings." To more homely minds "the conviction of the soundest understandings" will convey only fresh confirmation of the old familiar adage about the un wisdom of over-indulgence in the luxury of stone-throwing if you have the misfortune to live in a glass house. For either they were right or they were wrong, these Most Reverend Fathers in God. If they were right, how is Pius wrong? If they were wrong, then, at the worst, the "urgent" letters of the "sanguinary" Pope, who called for the punishment of armed heresy and treason, will compare not unfavourably with the truculence of men clamouring for the blood of a defenceless woman at the cruel hands of her unscrupulous cousin.

Well anyhow, it will perhaps be argued by our opponents, if Pius V. is acquitted, there is no denying the complicity of Gregory XIII. in the massacre. He at any rate is an accomplice after, if Pius is not an accessory before, the fact.

"Whether in matter of fact Gregory XIII. had a share in the guilt of the St. Bartholomew Massacre must be proved to me," wrote Cardinal Newman to the *Tablet* just twenty years ago, "before I believe it. It is commonly said in his defence that he had an untrue, one-sided account of the matter presented to him, and acted on misinformation. This involves a question of fact, which historians must decide. But even if they decide against the Pope, his infallibility is in no respect compromised. Infallibility is not impeccability. Even Caiphas prophesied, and Gregory was not quite a Caiphas."

Gregory was certainly no Caiphas, and though not a canonized Saint, he lived the life and died the

death of a holy Pope. The man who reformed the calendar and gave his name to it, was in the eyes of his contemporaries—this is the unanimous testimony of historians—a character of singular sweetness and gentleness, the very last man in the world to dream of, or rejoice in, deeds of treachery and bloodshed. But good or bad, his complicity in the massacre must be proved, not simply asserted, for when Catholics murder or massacre it is not a matter of course that the Pope is a consenting party. It is, as the Cardinal says, a question of fact and of proof. Now infallibility is not omniscience any more than it is impeccability. However deeply Catholics revere the Vicar of Christ, they do not, as Protestants sometimes accuse them of doing, invest the Pope with the attributes of the Almighty, “knowing all things, even our most secret thoughts.” His vision is limited like yours and mine, gentle reader; even he cannot see through a stone wall. The defence of Gregory commonly offered is the true defence. There is no proof, and never was any proof, that the Pope knew of an intended massacre; but there is proof in abundance that, after the event, its true character was studiously concealed from him by those who contrived and wrought it. The Cardinal of Como’s letter,<sup>1</sup> dated

<sup>1</sup> The following extract from Como’s letter to Salviati will show how little the Curia was aware at this date (Sept. 8th) of the true state of the case, complaining as it does of the scanty information supplied by Salviati. “While His Holiness, with all the [Sacred] College experienced great consolation and was full of joy on reading this news [he would have wished that your Lordship’s despatches had been fuller, more explicit, and circumstantial, this being a matter which deserved that you should write about it in great detail, adding such considerations as pertain to such an event, treating of the origin of these ideas, of the manner in which they have been carried into effect, with whose advice and co-operation, and what are the results which may be hoped

September 8th, asking for further information about the origin of the massacre, its authors, the manner of its execution, and its probable effects, as well as the despatches of the Nuncio in reply, prove conclusively that neither Pope nor Nuncio were in the plot nor in any way accessories to the deed.<sup>1</sup> Even if it be conceded that certain mysterious hints dropped in his presence at Court had given Salviati an inkling of coming treachery, it is at any rate plain from these letters that he had kept his suspicions dark, and that the event took him, no less than the Curia, completely by surprise. Davila, a strong partisan of Catherine's, expressly states that the design was concealed from the Nuncio; the continuator of Mackintosh says that the Nuncio was not in the confidence of those who contrived the plot; even Sismondi is of the same opinion. Indeed Salviati, in informing the Pope of the massacre, states that when, after their first attempt, the murderers discovered that Coligny was not dead, they "determined to throw all shame aside,"<sup>2</sup> words which do not read as if either he or the Pope, to whom he was writing, had any part in their acts.

Yes, the Pope *was* given a one-sided account of the matter and *did* act on misinformation.

for from them for the service of God according to your judgment concerning the event]. . . . *The writer here puts his pen through the passage in brackets, perhaps as being too long, and substitutes in its place the following:* "To say the truth, he would have wished that your letter had been a little fuller, the more so because on numberless other matters you have expressed yourself at much greater length and in greater detail. This, for the love I bear you, I am unwilling to keep from you." (Rom. Vatic., *Francia*, no. 283, 1572. See *Zeitschrift f. Geschw.*, l.c. note pp. 134, 135.)

<sup>1</sup> Salviati to Como, Sept. 22, apud Theiner, l.c. pp. 331, 332.

<sup>2</sup> Theiner, l.c. pp. 331, 332.

Charles IX. and his mother took very good care that he should be so misled and misinformed, a deception very much more easily accomplished in those days, than in these of telegraphs and "our own" correspondents. The King particularly requested Salviati to keep back his despatch, until his own letter to the Pope should be ready, "as he desired that his Ambassador should be the first to give his news to the Pope."<sup>1</sup> Salviati's letter, though dated on the 24th, only left Paris on the 26th of August, after the King had made his statement to Parliament. That statement was a declaration, read by Charles in presence of the Court and to a full House, to the effect that having, by God's mercy, discovered a nefarious plot to murder himself and all the royal family, to upset the monarchy and destroy the Church, he had inflicted prompt and well-merited punishment on the conspirators. This is the version, which studiously concealing the true character of the massacre and representing it as a necessary measure of self-preservation was embodied in the official despatches and sent off to Rome and all the Courts of Europe. The Sieur de Beauville, Charles' special envoy to the Pope, was moreover instructed to support the tenour of his despatches with such verbal explanations as might help still further to remove from the Pontiff's mind any suspicion of treachery or illegality.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Despatch of Salviati, August 24, apud Theiner, *Annales*, i. p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Theiner, l.c. cap. xliii.; also p. 336. See Letter of Louis de Bourbon (Montpensier), dated August 26, in which he tells the Pope, that Coligny had been detected in a conspiracy to kill the King and all the royal family for the purpose of setting up a king of his own religion and establishing Protestantism in France.

Philip of Spain and Queen Elizabeth both believed in the reality of the conspiracy. Philip saw in the execution of the Admiral and his followers the fulfilment of his own advice to Charles to deal vigorously with the Huguenots, until the truth was made known to him, when he condemned the massacre as savouring rather of Turkish savagery than Christian justice.<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth long believed in the truth of the official story, or at any rate acted as if she believed in it,<sup>2</sup> for more than two months after the massacre she told La Motte Fénelon, Charles' Ambassador, when acceding to that monarch's request to stand sponsor to his daughter, born at the end of October, that "as for the condemnation of the admiral and the others, if their ruin were for the safety of the King of France, no one would be more glad than herself that they were dead."<sup>3</sup>

If Philip and Elizabeth, if the people and Parliament of Paris were hoodwinked, why should not the Pope have been deceived as well? What was there to make the story improbable? Was it not, on the contrary, to the last degree probable? For many years—ever since the death of Henry II.—to get possession of the King's person, to separate him from his Italian mother and keep him in their possession, if only as a hostage and security for their own safety, had been a favourite scheme of Condé and

<sup>1</sup> Brantôme, *Vie de l'Amiral de Châtillon*, tom. viii.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Theiner, l.c. cap. xlvii. He says: "Ipsa Anglorum regina Elizabetha omni in hæreticos studio effusa de eorum conjuratione satis diu non dubitavit." He refers the reader to the *Recueil des dépêches, rapports, instructions, et mémoires des Ambassadeurs de France en Angleterre*, tom. 5, pp. 120, 138, 161, seq. Paris, 1840.

<sup>3</sup> *Dépêches de La Motte Fénelon*, vol. v. pp. 205, 206; ap. Strickland, *Elizabeth*, p. 283.



the Admiral. The conspiracy of Amboise had been followed once, if not twice, by similar projects. Familiar for years past with all this, the Pope hears of an event which is described to him as a stand-up fight between armed men, not as a treacherous and cold-blooded massacre; of a just punishment which he has reason to believe was lawfully inflicted on rebels and conspirators taken red-handed; of a deliverance which saved the life of the King, gave peace to France, and freed the Church from the ravages of an irreconcilable enemy—and all this on evidence, which, with the well-known antecedents of that enemy, it was the most natural thing in the world to accept as trustworthy. Three full months after the massacre it was still thought and spoken of in Rome as the repression of a murderous conspiracy, witness Muret's pompous harangue before the Pope and Cardinals, and in presence of the new envoy, sent by Charles to congratulate the Pontiff on his accession, and to remove from his mind any doubts it might still retain about the massacre.<sup>1</sup>

This, then, is that for which Catholics rejoiced and thanked God; not a lawless massacre, but the defeat of a Huguenot conspiracy, the deliverance of France from a relentless enemy, the triumph of right over wrong. It was natural that they should rejoice over an event which brought peace and safety to their side. Men just saved from an impending calamity do not stop to ask questions about the instruments of their deliverance. At least, they can hardly be expected not to feel and express joy for their safety. The Pope published a Jubilee, that is to say, he ordered

<sup>1</sup> Theiner, l.c. cap. xlvi. and pp. 336, 337.

a solemn thanksgiving to God for what he had been led to consider "a providential and almost miraculous escape" of the King of France from the "knavish tricks" of rebellious heretics, quite as legitimate a subject for congratulation, surely, as the mercy which our Anglican friends until lately commemorated in their thanksgiving services for "the happy deliverance of King James I. and the Three Estates of England from the most traitorous and bloody-intended massacre by gunpowder."<sup>1</sup>

There were, accordingly, processions, a *Te Deum*, illuminations, salvoes of artillery, and all the customary rejoicings on such occasions. The kindness of a friend has supplied me with a cast of the commemorative medal about which Protestants make such a pother. It witnesses as plainly, as anything of the sort can, to the belief of him who struck it in the story of an armed conspiracy put down by force of arms. It is the size of a two-shilling piece, and bears on the obverse the effigy of Gregory XIII., whilst on the reverse, under the legend *Vgonotiorum Strages*, stands the figure of the Destroying Angel, a cross in his left and a drawn sword in his right hand, in the act of defeating an armed band of six or seven Huguenots. Three of these are lying dead, another, perhaps intended for Coligny himself, equipped with helmet, breast-plate, and buckler, and holding in his right hand an uplifted, but broken sword, is on the point of falling; the rest, one of them apparently a woman, are running away in terror. The ground is strewn, as it would be after a fight, with buckler, sword, mace, and halberd. So much for the medal.

<sup>1</sup> Book of Common Prayer, 1824.

Vasari's painting of the St. Bartholomew bears the same witness. Those who are familiar with it describe it as the picture not of a massacre but of a stand-up fight or battle. When, it may be asked, did the paintings of the Vatican or the medals of the Pontifical museum begin to rank as Papal pronouncements? Artists are kittle cattle. When Paul III. took exception to the nudity of some of the figures in Michael Angelo's frescoes, the latter sent His Holiness word to trouble himself more about the reformation of men than the amendment of pictures. Vasari was at this time engaged upon the decoration of the Sala Regia in the Vatican Palace with frescoes descriptive of the Battle of Lepanto. He found an appropriate place in the same hall for a representation in three tableaux of the destruction of the Huguenots, a name which for years had been as full of menace and terror to Christendom as that of the abominable Turk himself. Surely, then, not love of truth, but only hatred of the Papacy can account for the persistency with which, evidence to the contrary notwithstanding, his indiscriminating assailants charge Gregory with approving the massacre, not as it had been told to him, but as history has revealed it to us with all its attendant horrors and the black lie which hid its guilt away, under a cloak of seeming legality, from the eyes of an amazed and horrified world.

But it is time to end. Whoever were the guilty contrivers of the massacre, whether the plot was of short or long premeditation, this much is certain, that the massacre was a purely political *coup d'état* by which, in the forcible language of Joseph de Maistre, "Quelques scélérats firent périr quelques scélérats,"

and that Catholics, as such, and the Holy See, in particular, are free from the least complicity in its guilt. If St. Pius V. was "urgent" for the extermination of rebellious heretics, his urgency was the same in kind as that which had preached the crusade against the Turk and had defeated him at Lepanto, a triumph in which, alas, Catholic France had no hand, she being in that hour (1571), unfortunately for her glory and her best interests, under the dominating influence of the Admiral of Châtillon. If Gregory XIII. was glad and gave thanks to God for the destruction of the Huguenots, this, we know, was because he had received a version of the tragedy which led him to believe, as it led others to believe, that they were only anticipated in their treacherous designs against the French Church and monarchy by timely measures of a regrettable but necessary severity. And so I take leave of the controversy, content if this small contribution to it has succeeded in throwing some little light into the dark corners of a mystery which calumny has done so much to deepen, and which will probably continue to be, in the future as in the past, better known than understood down to the Great Day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

# The Rood of Boxley, or How a Lie Grows.

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BY THE REV. T. E. BRIDGETT, C.S.S.R.

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## Preface.

THE following historical Essay is a reprint, with slight abridgment, of an article in the *Dublin Review* for January, 1888, which has also been reprinted in a series of papers called *Blunders and Forgeries*. (Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co., 1890.) Since its publication, Mr. James Gairdner has edited the thirteenth volume (Part I.) of the *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.* (1892), which deals with the period with which my Essay is concerned. No documents have been discovered throwing any new light on the history of the Boxley Rood, but I am rejoiced to find the view I have taken confirmed by so great an authority as Mr. Gairdner. In this edition I have added a few extracts from his Preface. There has also appeared a *History of Boxley Parish, the Abbey, &c.*, by Rev. J. Cave Brown, Vicar of Detling, Kent. (1892.) It is a very good specimen of parochial history. There are one or two minor inaccuracies, but the author has spared no pains in gathering from every

source, printed or MS., whatever belonged to his subject, and has illustrated his book with numerous engravings. He has added to our knowledge of Boxley Abbey, but he has not discovered any document hitherto unknown regarding the Rood of Grace. I regret to say that he has renewed the gravest charges of imposture against the monks. As he refers to my Essay, I reply to his remarks in a postscript. I have found no reason to modify any statement I had made, or argument I had used.

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## 1. The Case Stated.

IN the spring of 1538 Thomas Cromwell, Vicar-General in things spiritual of Henry VIII., become by Act of Parliament Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England, provided, for the edification of the King's flock in London, a solemn spectacle. A crucifix, which had long borne the name of the Rood of Grace, was brought from the Cistercian Abbey of Boxley,<sup>1</sup> near Maidstone, and exhibited at St. Paul's Cross, as a sample of monastic imposture.

"On Sunday, the 24th February," writes Stow in his *Annals*, "the Rood of Boxley, in Kent, called the Rood of Grace, *made with divers vices to move the eyes and lips*, was showed at Paul's Cross by the preacher, which was the Bishop of Rochester, and there it was broken and plucked in pieces."<sup>2</sup> It was asserted by Cromwell, his partisans and agents, at the time of its exhibition and destruction, that the movements of the Rood were the only miracles ever performed in Boxley Abbey church, and that the pilgrims and the whole world had been cheated by the monks into the belief that these mechanical movements, produced by the trickery of a concealed monk, were Divine manifestations of favour or displeasure. It is maintained by the writer of this paper that the miracles

<sup>1</sup> Hasted, in his *History of Kent* (vol. iv.), erroneously says the rood was in the parish church of Boxley. It was in the abbey church, now destroyed. This was originally dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, yet as early as 1412, it was called Abbatia S. Crucis de Gratiis.

<sup>2</sup> Stow, *Annals*, p. 575 Vices are screws, joints, mechanism.

wrought, or supposed to have been wrought, or graces obtained, before this crucifix, had nothing whatever to do with these movements, which were perfectly well known by all who ever witnessed them to be merely mechanical.

It must be premised that the question is of more importance than the mere vindication of the good name of the monks of Boxley. From the days of the suppression of the monasteries to the present time the frauds of the monks have been the theme of our historians. The accusation is nearly always a general one, but the solitary example, always brought forward as a mere specimen, is the Rood of Grace. There is no need to turn to Burnet or to Strype—the story is told in every history, ecclesiastical or secular. It is not one of the slanders current while passions were still hot after the change of religion, and then rejected or silently dropped in less bigoted times. It is taken for a proved and universally accepted fact, and narrated at the present day either with fiery invectives, scoffs, or pious lamentations, according to the character of the writers.<sup>1</sup>

Before examining the evidence we must hear the accusations and take note of the points requiring proof.

<sup>1</sup> "These accretions on Divine worship went on accumulating like a snowball, till one day a crowd was gathered in St. Paul's Churchyard; and a great image was drawn in from Boxley, in Kent, with all its secret wires and pulleys complete; and the Bishop of Rochester put it through all its religious antics, and made it bow its head and roll its eyes and weep out of a sponge cleverly concealed behind. And then what wonder that it, and all the like of it, were tossed with ribald insults into the flames! What wonder," &c. &c.—*Speech of the Rev. G. H. Curteis, Canon of Lichfield, and Professor of New Testament Exegesis, King's College, London, before the Anglican Church Congress. (The Guardian, Oct. 5, 1887.)*



A miraculous crucifix [writes Hume] had been kept at Boxley, in Kent, and bore the appellation of the Rood of Grace. The lips and eyes and head of the image moved *on the approach of its votaries*. Hilsey, Bishop of Rochester, broke the crucifix at St. Paul's Cross, and showed to the whole people the springs and wheels by which it had been secretly moved.

In this passage Hume makes two, or rather three, assertions. That there was a mechanical or puppet crucifix at Boxley, that it was shown and destroyed in London, I admit; that the eyes, &c., "moved on the approach of its votaries," is what I deny.

Russell, another historian of the last century, writes as follows :

At the visitation of the monasteries, prior to the suppression, several astonishing discoveries were made, which tended greatly to lessen the authority of the Romish priests in the eyes of the people. One of the most singular instruments of deception was found at Boxley in Kent.

Let the reader mark that there are said to have been "several discoveries," while the single instance of Boxley is given, no other instance being ever adduced either by Russell or any other historian. He goes on :

It was a remarkable crucifix, held in the highest veneration, and distinguished by the appellation of the Rood of Grace. It had been often seen to move, to bend, to raise itself, shake its head, hands and feet, roll its eyes, and move its lips. On removing the image it was discovered that the whole was effected by certain springs concealed in the body, which was hollow, from the wall against which it was placed. This instrument of religious deception was brought to London, &c.

The assertion is here made that the crucifix "had often been seen to move." We shall have to inquire by whom? when? for what purpose were the movements produced, and what was thought of them? We shall find that the only facts proved and certain are that parts of the rood were movable, and that the rood was destroyed.

These two examples will suffice for the older class of historians who merely transcribed from printed books, with various arrangement and more or less skill, but without any independent examination of evidence. Of late years history is supposed to have become a science as well as an art. Historians profess to sift carefully their facts and to go to original sources. Who would not suppose that Mr. Froude was copying from an official report, instead of abridging Foxe, when he writes :

The most famous of the roods was that of Boxley in Kent, which used to smile and bow, and frown or shake its head, as its worshippers were generous or close-handed.<sup>1</sup>

I shall give presently Foxe's statement, as well as official papers, and it will be seen whence Mr. Froude has taken this part at least of his history. But supposing the account to be authentic, the curious reader will no doubt regret that Mr. Froude did not explain the material of which the face was made that could smile and frown. Wood of course it was not. Could it be *papier mâché*? but that also is stiff. Was it an early importation of india-rubber or caoutchouc?

A later writer than Mr. Froude is Dr. Hook, the

<sup>1</sup> *History*, vol. ii. p. 92.

historian of the Archbishops of Canterbury. I transcribe the following page :

Cromwell wielded the lawful weapons of controversy in the cause of sincerity and truth when he exposed to public gaze the impostures which had been the disgrace of too many monasteries. He exhibited to the astonished multitude the strings and wires and pulleys by which the image, too long worshipped by an idolatrous people, was made to open its eyes, to move its lips, to expand its mouth, and to perform other grimaces indicative of approbation when a wealthy ignoramus made an offering of jewels or of gold. The tricks were played upon pilgrims by the lowest class of persons in the monasteries, and were laughed at by some at the head of affairs. The indignation of all classes was directed against the abbots and priors who, having the power, had abstained from using it. So far they deserved their fate. They confounded credulity with faith, and forgot who is the father of lies.<sup>1</sup>

So far Dean Hook. We shall see presently who was the father of lies in this matter. But first I would ask the reader to note the forms of expression in the passage just quoted. Boxley is not mentioned by name, yet it must be the instance referred to, since it is certain that Cromwell exposed to public gaze no other strings and wires than those of the Rood of Grace. Yet "the image" might mean that particular image, or it might stand grammatically for, or be meant as typical of, many similar images, and this meaning is certainly suggested by the "many monasteries" spoken of just before, and by the "abbots and priors" just after. So, even were the Boxley imposture proved to be such as Dr. Hook describes it, it is here multiplied indefinitely, and the abbots and priors throughout England are all made to bear

<sup>1</sup> *Lives of the Archbishops*, vol. vi. ch. i. p. 92.

the iniquities of the single Abbot of Boxley, supposing that he was really guilty. Moreover, the whole matter is narrated as circumstantially as if given on the testimony of a score of eye-witnesses. Yet the grimaces approving the offering of the wealthy ignoramus, and the tricks of the lowest class of the monks, and laughter and connivance of the higher class, all these things are the merest fictions, partly copied from former historians, partly the Dean's own invention.

It is generally admitted that we cannot compete with our ancestors of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in architecture ; and if half the things told us about the Rood of Grace were true, it would be equally certain that we have degenerated in the plastic and mechanical arts ; but historians of the nineteenth century assuredly do not fall behind those of the eighteenth or sixteenth in the art of fiction. One more specimen will suffice. The writer of the chapters on the History of Religion in Knight's *Pictorial History of England* thus discourses about the Boxley Rood :

This image was no mere stock, but was endowed with the faculty of replying to the worship and oblations offered to it by various significant gestures, rolling its eyes, bending its brows, moving its lips, shaking its head, hands and feet, courteously inclining its whole body when it was pleased with what was set before it, and by some other equally expressive piece of pantomime denoting its dissatisfaction and rejection of the applicant's prayer. This must be admitted [remarks this philosophical historian] to have been an ingenious piece of mechanism for an age in which the general ignorance of mechanical science was gross enough to allow of its being put forward as something supernatural.

I must be excused for parodying this author by saying that "it must be admitted that his description is an ingenious piece of fiction, for an age in which the general ignorance of critical science is gross enough to allow of its being put forward as something historical." It is really amazing that serious authors, one after another, for three centuries, could record these things without submitting them to the most elementary examination.

## **2. A Fact to be Noted.**

Before quoting the evidence, I think it necessary to say something by way of explanation. It is quite clear that our historians, from Lord Herbert and Hume downwards, have taken for granted that if there was really a crucifix at Boxley, an object of pilgrimage, and in construction such as it is described by Stow, "made with divers vices to move the eyes and lips," then the imposture is proved. For what other purpose could such a crucifix serve than to deceive pilgrims? And what other object could there be in the deception than to get their money? So, having assured themselves that there really was such a crucifix, they think the exact particulars are immaterial, and that they may freely enlarge on the fashion of the Rood and on the credulity of the worshippers. The story, they think, will be substantially true, though some few details may not be capable of proof. Nor should I contest the matter with them were the question merely as to the more or less of an admitted imposture. I admit the mechanism, but maintain that the existence of the mechanism gives no presumption whatever of trickery,

that it had a perfectly legitimate purpose and use ; and I deny that there is any particle of evidence of a single case of imposture, or even to justify a suspicion of imposture.

In a passage just quoted an author speaks of the Rood of Grace as having been "an ingenious piece of mechanism for an age in which the general ignorance of mechanical science was gross enough to allow of its being put forward as something supernatural." Now, if the mechanism did not go much beyond what is described by Stow, the movement of eyes and lips, and perhaps of some joints—and that it did not shall soon be proved beyond gainsay—it was in no way extraordinary for that age, and there was no more likelihood of its being considered supernatural *on that account* than there is of the waxwork figures in Madame Tussaud's Exhibition being taken for living men and women by modern visitors. Puppets and pageantry were more familiar things then than now. Let any one open the pages of Hall the chronicler, and read his long and (to us) tiresome accounts of the pageants of Henry VII. and Henry VIII., and he will see at once how delighted both people and princes were with ingenious mechanism.

The accusers of the monks seem instinctively to have felt this difficulty, and have therefore not been satisfied with describing the Rood as it was. They have vied with one another in inventing details—such as smiling, frowning, weeping, expanding the mouth—the contrivance of which would baffle any artificer of the present day. Though such things were historically impossible, they were necessary for consistency, seeing that the pilgrims to Boxley were

not mere country bumpkins, but lords and ladies, kings and queens, bishops and archbishops ; and it had to be made plausible how all these should have been taken in by the wonderful imposture.<sup>1</sup>

The mechanism was not in any way wonderful, nor adapted for deception. What, then, was its purpose ? I will explain. Pageantry and mechanism in that age were not confined to marriage and coronation processions of kings and queens. They had been used in churches, in miracle-plays (as they were called), and even in permanent contrivances of devotion. Alderman Gosiman, of Hull, left in 1502, by his will, a sum of £40 in honour of the Blessed Sacrament, in order to construct at the high altar some machinery by which angels should ascend to the roof of the church and descend again, from the Elevation of the Sacred Host to the end of the *Pater noster*.<sup>2</sup> Even in our own day, in some churches in Bavaria and the Tyrol, as I have learned from eye-witnesses, a figure above the high altar representing our Lord in His Agony in the Garden is made to kneel, to prostrate itself, and to rise again, while the preacher describes the scene ; and on the Ascension a figure rises into the air and disappears in the roof. A gentleman informs me that he has seen in Belgium a crucifix used formerly in the ceremonial of Holy Week. On Good Friday the arms could be depressed, so that it could be laid, together with the Blessed Sacrament, in the sepulchre until Easter Sunday

<sup>1</sup> On July 31, 1492, Henry VII. sent an offering of 4s. from Sittingbourne. (*Excerpta Historica*, p. 91.) In 1502 Queen Elizabeth of York did the same. (See *infra*, p. 85.)

<sup>2</sup> *Testamenta Eborac.* p. 209.

morning. The Sacred Host was placed inside the breast of the figure, behind a crystal. At the Resurrection the figure was gorgeously dressed, and placed seated above the high altar, with one arm raised in benediction. It is needless to say that in all this there was pageantry, childish pageantry if you like, but no imposture.

In England the rood was generally laid, together with the Blessed Sacrament, in the sepulchre on Good Friday; and in some of the greater churches the Sacred Host, when taken from the sepulchre early on Easter morning, was enclosed, behind a berill or crystal, in the breast of a figure of our risen Lord. Now it would be antecedently probable enough that, in some cases, instead of using two distinct figures, one figure, with eyes made to open and close, and jointed limbs, might serve for both purposes. By a fortunate chance the record of one such figure has survived, and it was in existence at St. Paul's Church, London, at the very time that the Boxley Rood was burnt at St. Paul's Cross. Wriothesley records in his *Chronicle* that on the 29th of November, 1547, the first of Edward VI., being the first Sunday of Advent, Dr. Barlow, Bishop of St. David's, preached at Paul's Cross—

Where he showed a picture (*i.e.*, painted figure) of the Resurrection of our Lord made with vices (*i.e.*, movable joints), *which put out his legs of sepulchre and blessed with his hand, and turned his head*, and there stood afore the pulpit the image of our Lady, which they of Paul's had lapped in cerecloth, which was hid in a corner of Paul's Church, and found by the visitors in their visitation. And in his sermon he declared the great abomination of idolatry in images, with other feigned ceremonies contrary to Scripture, to the



extolling of God's glory, and to the great comfort of the audience. After the sermon the boys broke the idols in pieces.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Sparrow Simpson, a recent historian of Old St. Paul's, after quoting this passage, makes the following reflection: "It is easy to understand that the exhibition of these mechanical figures, skilfully contrived to deceive the worshippers, must have greatly stimulated the zeal of the Reformers."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Simpson has clearly not understood the words he quoted, or he could never have made such a comment. "Skilfully contrived to deceive the worshippers"! Why! there is not the most distant hint at deception. Barlow denounced idolatry and feigned *ceremonies*, not imposture. As well say that an artist's lay-figure, with its movable joints and neck, is a delusion and a snare. The vices or screws of the joints would be visible to the most short-sighted; and Englishmen before the Reformation were not quite idiots.

Besides this use of the crucifix, it must be remembered that in the middle ages the rood did not merely call to mind our Divine Redeemer's sufferings, but especially His triumph; the Cross had become a throne: *Regnat a ligno Deus*. Hence the figure was sometimes crowned, not with thorns, but with a diadem of gold or silver, and wore royal robes. This was the case throughout Europe, and may be illustrated by Kentish documents of the sixteenth century. In Archbishop Warham's visitation of 1511, a charge was brought against a layman for neglecting to furnish "a pair of silver shoes for the Rood of

<sup>1</sup> Wriothesley's *Chronicle*, vol. ii. p. 1. (Camden Society.)

<sup>2</sup> *Chapters in the History of Old St. Paul's*, p. 290.

Chislet," in accordance with an obligation left on a house he had inherited.<sup>1</sup> When Richard Master, the rector of Aldington, in Kent, was, just four years previous to the suppression of Boxley, attainted and executed for high treason in the affair of the Maid of Kent, an inventory was made of the goods in his presbytery. Among them were found "two coats belonging to the Cross of Rudhill, whereupon hung thirty-three pieces of money, rings and other things, and three crystal stones closed in silver."<sup>2</sup> The purpose of these coats and shoes was evidently for dressing up the crucifixes on Easter Day or other festivals. If, then, a figure could be made at one time to represent death by closed eyelids, fallen jaw and drooping neck; at another, life, by mouth closed, opened eyes, head erect and hand raised in benediction, it would carry out more vividly the purposes for which we know that roods were used, and would have no touch of trickery about it. Whether the Rood of Boxley was ever thus treated cannot be now shown; but that it was originally designed for some such purpose will be made clear by the documents that I shall now adduce.

### 3. Official Documents.

First of all we must hear the witnesses for the accusation, and I shall not pass over any one that I have seen quoted or referred to. The following is a letter of one of the commissioners sent out by Cromwell for the suppression of the monasteries.

<sup>1</sup> *Diocesan History of Canterbury*, by Canon Jenkins, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII.* vol. vii. n. 521.

As it is of great importance, I shall give it in the original spelling.<sup>1</sup>

Jeffrey Chamber to T. Cromwell, Feb. 15th.<sup>2</sup>

Upon the defacing of the late monasterye of Boxley and plucking down of the images of the same, I found in the Image of the Roode of Grace, the which heretofore hathe ben hadde in great veneracion of people, certen ingynes and olde wyer with olde roton stykes in the backe of the same that dyd cause the eyes of the same to move and stere in the hede thereof lyke unto a lyvelye thyng. And also the nether lippe in lykewise to move as thoughe it shulde speke. Which so founde was nott a litle strange to me and other that was present at the pluckinge downe of the same.

Whereupon the abbott herynge this brut [*i.e.*, rumour] dyd thether resorte whom to my litle wit and conyng with other the olde monkes I dyd examyen of ther knowleg of the premisses. Who do declare themselves to be ignorant of the same. So remyttynge the further<sup>3</sup> of the premisses unto your goode lordeshipe when they shal repayer unto London. Neverthesse the sayde abbot is sore seke that as yett he is not able to come.

Further, when I hadde scene this strange sight, and consideryng that thinhabitants of the cuntie of Kent hadd yn tyme past a greate devocion to the same and to use continuall pillgrimage thether, by thadvise of other that wer her w<sup>t</sup> me dyd convey the sayd image unto Mayston this present Thursday, then beyng the markett day, and in the cheff of the markett tyme dyd shew itt openly unto all the people ther being present, to see the false crafty and sottile handelyng thereof, to the dishonor of God and illusion of the sayd people, whoo I dare say that if in case the sayd late monasterye were to be defaced agayne (the

<sup>1</sup> The original document is in the Record Office, in the Cromwell *Correspondence*, vol. v. f. 210. I owe the transcript to the kindness of Dom Gasquet, O.S.B. It is, however, in Ellis, 3rd series, iii. 168. Also, abridged in *Letters and Papers*, vol. xiii. 231.

<sup>2</sup> The date is 7th Feb. at end of letter.

<sup>3</sup> A word, such as "examining," must be supplied.

kyng's grace not offendyd) they wold aither plucke itt down to the grounde or ells burne it, for they have the sayd matter in wonderous detestacion and hatred as att my repayr unto your good lordeshipe and bryngyng the same image w<sup>t</sup> me, whereuppon I do somewhatt tarrye and for the further defacyng of the sayd late monasterye I shall declare unto youe. And thus almyghty Jesu p'serve youe to hys pleasure w<sup>t</sup> good liff and long.

At Maydeston the vii. day of Feb.

Yor mooste bounden,

JEFFRAY CHAMBER.

Before examining this letter I will give one, written about three weeks later, by another of these commissioners. The Abbey of Boxley had been surrendered to the King on January 29, 1538, the monastery had then been "defaced," *i.e.*, the house stript of all its plate and furniture and other valuables, and the church of its shrines, chalices, vestments, and then the sacred images "plucked down" to be burnt or otherwise maltreated, if they were of wood, to be cast into the melting-pot if they were of silver or gold. On the following Thursday, the 7th of February, it had been exposed to derision in the market-place at Maidstone, and thence conveyed to London. On Sunday, the 24th, it was exposed and destroyed at St. Paul's Cross. Some time in February Robert Southwell had visited Cromwell for his instructions before proceeding to Northampton. From Northampton he writes to Cromwell on the 3rd March:

These poor men [the monks of Northampton] have not spared to confess the truth, and I dare say in their hearts think themselves rather to have merited pardon by their ignorance, than praise or laud by their former way of living.

By confession *of the truth* Southwell means the signing of the usual formula, which was the condition of their receiving a pension, in which they confess that regular observance was vain superstition. The Northampton monks, it seems, had been threatened and cajoled into this declaration. Southwell then adds :

Whether there was cause why that Boxley should recognize as much or more it may please you to judge, whom it also pleased to show me the idol that stood there, in mine opinion a very monstrous object.<sup>1</sup>

These two letters comprise what may be called the official documents regarding the Rood of Grace ; at least they were written by officials. Who were the men who thus wrote? What purpose had they in thus writing? What is it that they tell as fact, and what is it that they tell as their own opinion? They were men employed by Cromwell as the fittest tools he could find for a sacrilegious work.<sup>2</sup> They were sent out, not merely to get the submission of the monks, but to do all they could to blacken their character. "The King, having the dissolution of the remaining monasteries in view," writes Collier, "thought it necessary to lessen their reputation, to lay open the superstition of their worship, and to draw a charge of imposture upon some of them." As Cromwell's jackals, the commissioners wished to get from their master some part of the spoil. To obtain this they wrote what would please him and the King.

What does Southwell tell us as a fact, apart from

<sup>1</sup> Printed in Wright's *Letters* relating to the Suppression of Monasteries, p. 172. (Camden Society.)

<sup>2</sup> Geoffrey Chamber was one of the packed jury who found Sir Thomas More guilty of high treason.

his own opinion that the Rood of Grace was an "idol," and "a very monstrous object"? Nothing whatever. But he insinuates that it would be ground sufficient to get some *confession* from the Boxley monks that they had practised imposture. Was such a confession ever obtained? Certainly not. A charge was made by Cromwell, but neither proof against the monks nor acknowledgment on their part was ever produced or even pretended.

What does Jeffrey Chamber tell us? That he found "old wire and old rotten sticks" at the back of the image. The mechanism was evidently not in repair. If it had been ever used, it had long been out of use. The Abbot and old monks declared they knew nothing about it.<sup>1</sup> Chamber does not say that he has proof to the contrary. He does not say that he has witnesses to bring to London, who will tell of the moving eyes and mouth, or that such things had ever been reputed as miracles. He does not say that there was any secret approach to the back of the rood in the wall or pillar against which it stood, by which the wires and sticks might have been secretly manipulated. This is surely a difficulty, and it was evidently felt to be a difficulty; for Foxe the martyrologist, in order to get over it, says that, "a man stood enclosed within the rood with a hundred wires."<sup>2</sup> The sum of all the official documents is the discovery that the famous Rood was a mechanical figure of which the mechanism was

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gairdner calls it "a toy that had had its day." He understands the monks to mean "that they know nothing of the history of the apparatus, which had probably been long disused." (*Letters and Papers*, vol. xiii. Introd. p. viii.)

<sup>2</sup> The whole passage will be given presently.

apparently disused, and that it afforded a convenient pretext, not for proving any distinct art of trickery, but for connecting the fame of former miracles with a plausible but vague charge of imposture.

#### 4. Lambard's Story.

I now turn to the contemporary, or nearly contemporary writers to whom reference is made by modern historians. The first in order of importance, though not the earliest, is William Lambard, author of a *Perambulation of Kent*, written in 1570. He is by far the most full, and the only writer who professes to rely on Catholic documents. After a brief description of Boxley, he continues as follows :

If I should thus leave Boxley, the favourers of false and feigned religion [Catholics] would laugh in their sleeves, and the followers of God's truth might justly cry out and blame me. For it is fresh in mind to both sides, and shall, I doubt not, to the profit of the one, be continued in perpetual memory to all posterity, by what notable imposture, fraud, juggling, and legerdemain, the silly lambs of God's flock were no long since seduced by the false Romish foxes at this abbey. The manner whereof I will set down in such sort only as the same was sometime by themselves published in print for their estimation and credit,<sup>1</sup> and yet remaineth deeply imprinted in the minds and memories of many alive, and to their everlasting reproach, shame, and confusion.

It chanced, as the tale is, that upon a time a cunning carpenter of our country was taken prisoner in the wars between us and France, who wanting [*i.e.*, having no

<sup>1</sup> No such paper is known to exist, at present, no such paper was sent to Cromwell, no allusion to such a paper is to be found elsewhere. Mr. Gairdner calls Lambard's "a rather doubtful story." (*Letters and Papers*, vol. xiii. Introd. p. viii.)

means] otherwise to satisfy for his ransom, and having good leisure to devise for his deliverance, thought it best to attempt some curious enterprise within the compass of his own art and skill to make himself some money withal. And, therefore, getting together fit matter for his purpose, he compacted of wood, wire, paste, and paper a rood of such exquisite art and excellence that it not only matched in comeliness and due proportion of the parts the best of the common sort, but in strange motion, variety of gesture, and nimbleness of joints passed all other that before had been seen; the same being able to bow down and lift up itself, to shake and stir the hands and feet, to nod the head, to roll the eyes, to wag the chaps, to bend the brows, and finally to represent to the eye both the proper motion of each member of the body, and also a lively, express, and significant show of a well-contented or displeased mind, biting the lip, and gathering a frown, froward, and disdainful face when it would pretend offence, and showing a most mild, amiable, and smiling cheer and countenance when it would seem to be well pleased. So that now it needed not Prometheus' fire to make it a lively man, but only the help of the covetous priests of Bel, or the aid of some crafty college of monks, to deify and make it pass for a very god.

This done, he made shift for his liberty, came over into the realm of purpose to utter his merchandise, and laid the image upon the back of a jade that he drave before him. Now when he was come as far as Rochester on his way, he waxed dry by reason of travel, and called at an alehouse for drink to refresh him, suffering his horse nevertheless to go forward alone along the city. This jade was no sooner out of sight but he missed the straight western way that his master intended to have gone, and turning south, made a great pace toward Boxley, and being driven, as it were, by some divine fury, never ceased jogging till he came at the abbey church door, where he so beat and bounced with his heels that divers of the monks heard the noise, came to the place to know the cause, and marveling at the strangeness of the thing, called the abbot and his convent to behold it.



These good men seeing the horse so earnest and discerning what he had on his back, for doubt of deadly impiety opened the door, which they had no sooner done but the horse rushed in and ran in great haste to a pillar, which was the very place where this image was afterwards advanced, and there stopped himself and stood still.

Now, while the monks were busy to take off the load, in cometh the carpenter, that by great inquisition had followed, and he challenged his horse. The monks, loth to lose so beneficial a stray, at the first made some denial, but afterward, being assured by all signs that he was the very proprietary, they grant him to take it with him. The carpenter then taketh the horse by the head and first essayeth to lead him out of the church, but he would not stir for him, then beateth he, and striketh him, but the jade was so resty and fast-nailed that he would not once move his foot from the pillar. At last he taketh off the image, thinking to have carried it out by itself, and then to have led the horse after, but that also cleaved so fast to the place that notwithstanding all that even he and the monks also, which at the length were contented for pity's sake to help him, could do—it would not be moved one inch from it. So that in the end, partly of weariness in wrestling, and partly by persuasion of the monks, which were in love with the picture, and made him believe that it was by God Himself destinate to their house, the carpenter was contented for a piece of money to go his way and leave the rood behind him.

But what? I shall not need to report how lewdly these monks, to their own enriching and the spoil of God's people, abused this wooden god after they had thus gotten him, because a good sort be yet alive that saw the fraud openly detected at Paul's Cross, and others may read it disclosed in books extant and commonly abroad.

Neither will I labour to compare it throughout with the Trojan Palladium, which was a picture of wood that could shake a spear and roll the eyes as lively as this rood did, and which, falling from heaven, chose itself a place in the temple as wisely as the carpenter's horse did, and had otherwise so great convenience and agreement with our

image that a man would easily believe the device had been taken from thence. But I will only note for my purpose, and the place's sake, that even as they fancied that Troy was upholden by that image, and that the taking of it away by Diomedes and Ulysses brought destruction, by sentence of the oracle, upon their city, so the town of Boxley, which stood chiefly by the abbey, was, through the discovery and defacing of this idol and another (wrought by Cranmer and Cromwell), according to the just judgment of God, hastened to utter decay and beggary.

Before quoting the rest of Lambard's story, I pause here to consider the relation just given. Lambard was a lawyer, and ought not to object to cross-examination. Either this whole story is a pure invention of Lambard's, in which case the rest of his evidence against the monks is of no value, or he got the substance of it, as he says he did, from some Catholic documents, once spread about widely, and now apparently lost. What is the substance of the story? It is that, as regards the Rood itself, there was no attempt whatever at concealment or imposture. It was published abroad by the monks that the Rood was the work of a clever carpenter, that it was a piece of mechanism. There was no pretence that its movements were miraculous. It was not even a monkish invention; it was the work of a layman. It had not been originally contrived with a view to trickery, nor offered to the monks for such a purpose. Lambard, indeed, finds a parallel in the Trojan Palladium, so that "a man would believe that the device had been taken from thence." But the monks did *not* say that their Rood dropped from Heaven, nor that its action was celestial. Its arrival at Boxley they may have considered providential or even

miraculous, though of course it is evident that the comic scene of "tug monks, tug crucifix," till the former gave up for sheer "weariness of wrestling," is not copied literally from the original documents. Neither of course is the description of the Rood itself. The arms may have been movable, and we know that the eyes and lower lip could move, but the smiles and frowns, the knitted brow, the moving cheeks, the biting of the lip, are a mere fancy portrait, of which we shall have some more specimens presently. If his work in any way corresponded to these descriptions, the carpenter made a bad bargain in selling it to the monks "for a piece of money." A thousand would not purchase it now.

Lambard thus continues his narrative :

And now, since I am fallen into mention of that other image which was honoured at this place, I will not stick to bestow a few words for the detection thereof also, as well for that it was as very an illusion as the former, as also for that the use of them was so linked together that the one cannot thoroughly be understood without the other ; for this was the order : If you minded to have benefit by the Rood of Grace, you ought first to be shriven of one of the monks. Then by lifting of this other image, which was untruly of the common sort called St. Grumbald, for St. Rumwald, you should make proof whether you were in clean life (as they called it) or no. And if you so found yourself, then was your way prepared, and your offering acceptable before the Rood. If not, then it behoved you to be confessed anew, for it was to be thought that you had concealed somewhat from your ghostly dad, and therefore not yet worthy to be admitted *Ad Sacra Eleusina*.

Now, that you may know how this examination was to be made, you must understand that this St. Rumwald was the picture of a pretty boy-saint of stone, standing in the same church, of itself short, and not seeming to be heavy ;

but forasmuch as it was wrought out of a great and weighty stone, being the base thereof, it was hardly to be lifted by the hands of the strongest man. Nevertheless, such was the conveyance, by the help of an engine fixed to the back thereof, it was easily prised up with the foot of him that was the keeper, and therefore of no moment at all in the hands of such as had offered frankly. And contrariwise, by the means of a pin running into a post, which that religious impostor, standing out of sight, could put in and pull out at his pleasure, it was, to such as offered faintly, so fast and unmoveable that no force of hand might once stir it. Insomuch, as many times it moved more laughter than devotion to behold a great lubber to lift at that in vain, which a young boy or wench had easily taken up before him. I wist that chaste virgins and honest married matrons went oftentimes away with blushing faces, leaving (without cause) in the minds of the looker-on great suspicion of unclean life and wanton behaviour; for fear of which note and villany women (of all other) stretched their purse-strings, and sought by liberal offering to make St. Rumwald's man their good friend and favourer.<sup>1</sup>

But mark here, I beseech you, their policy in picking plain men's purses. It was in vain (as they persuaded) to presume to the Rood without shrift; yea, and money lost there also, if you offered before you were in clean life; and therefore the matter was so handled that without treble oblation, that is to say, first to the confessor, then to St. Rumwald, and lastly to the Gracious Rood, the poor pilgrims could not assure themselves of any good gained by all their labour. No more than such as go to Paris Garden, Belle Savage, or Theatre, to behold bear-baiting, interludes, or fence-play, can account of any pleasant spectacle unless they first pay one penny at the gate, another at the entry of the scaffold, and the third for a quiet standing.

Such is the account of the pilgrimage to the Rood of Grace given by William Lambard. It

<sup>1</sup> Did the young boys and wenches, who lifted it so easily, as he has just said, also pay heavily?

might seem very unlikely that, at this distance of time, we should have any means of testing the statement about the triple offering. Fortunately, Sir Harris Nicolas has printed the Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York, Queen of Henry VII., for the year 1502. Being unwell in the spring of that year, and unable herself to go on pilgrimage, she sent some of her chaplains as messengers to various shrines, there to pray and make offerings in her name. One of these, Richard Milner, was sent into Kent. He was absent thirteen days, and was paid at a fixed rate for his travelling expenses and reimbursed for his various oblations. In the bill, therefore, handed in to the steward for payment nothing, however small, was omitted. It will be a moderate estimation if we multiply each sum in his account by twelve, to represent its value in modern money. His expenses then, were 10d. (or we may say 10s.) a day. His journey was as follows: To Our Lady of Crowham (near Croydon), offering, 2s. 6d.; to the Rood of Grace at Boxley, offering, 1s. 8d.; to Canterbury, where four oblations are specified, viz., to St. Thomas, 5s.; Our Lady of Undercroft, 5s.; St. Adrian, 1s. 8d.; St. Augustine, 1s. 8d.; to Dover, where the offering at our Lady's shrine was 1s. 8d. Thence the messenger returns to London: At the Rood at the north door of St. Paul's Cathedral, 1s. 8d.; to Our Lady of Grace in St. Paul's, 1s. 8d.; to St. Ignasi (*sic*), 1s. 8d.; in the Blackfriars Church, to St. Dominick, 1s. 8d.; to St. Peter of Milan, 1s.; in the Franciscan Church, to St. Francis, 1s. 8d.; to St. Saviour (in Southwark), 2s. 6d.; to Our Lady of Piew at Westminster, 2s. 6d.;

to Our Lady of Barking (at Allhallow's Church, near the Tower), 2s. 6d. ; to Our Lady of Willesden, 2s. 6d. From this list, then, it appears that one offering only was made at Boxley, not a triple offering, and that it was one of the most moderate. No offering whatever was made to St. Rumwald, no gift to the confessor.

Of course this single case is not proposed as a logical and conclusive refutation of a general statement ; but at least it is an authentic piece of evidence, and as such worth more than Lambard's unsupported assertions. There are many entries in documents that have come down to us of offerings to the Rood of Grace, but I do not remember any notice of a triple or double offering in this church. Nor do the other accusers of the monks make any mention of St. Rumwald. According to Lambard, it was a second imposture, enhancing the principal one. Yet his tale holds badly together. If the pilgrims knew that the Rood was worked by machinery, how was it they suspected no mechanical contrivance in St. Rumwald's statue? A pin to keep a post firm, or a lever worked by the foot, are no recondite artifices that they should be unsuspected in any place ; but the presence of a work of art like the crucifix must have suggested a similar mechanism in St. Rumwald, even to boors or children. In the absence of documents, it seems to me quite possible that there was, in some part of the church of Boxley, some old stone-block or statue, and that a sacristan may have sometimes made a little innocent fun with the pilgrims, by fastening or withdrawing a bolt, and getting up a laugh at those who could not lift, as if they were prevented by some

hidden sin. I would not assert that such was the case; but if it were so, it would be analogous to many bits of fun not unknown in our own days. The visitors to Ripon will remember the underground remains of the ancient abbey still shown in the crypt, and how ladies were invited to go through a small window, called St. Wilfrid's needle, as a proof of their chastity, or to obtain good luck in marriage. In Merry England such things may have been done, but not more seriously than now.

We have heard one of the early accusers of the monks. His story, when stripped of its dressings-up, is not very formidable. Yet it is the only one that even professes to recount the real origin and nature of the Rood; while he—and he alone—appeals to Catholic testimony “in such sort only as the same was by themselves published in print.” His story is indeed not without some difficulty. If these printed accounts of the fabrication of the Rood were in circulation at the time of the suppression, how could the abbot and his monks declare their ignorance of the existence of the “engines”? Or, if they knew of them, why should they not at once have appealed to the printed papers, to show that there had been no attempt to conceal anything from the people? However this may be, if Lambard is telling a lie in saying that he is using Catholic documents about the making of the Rood and its coming to Boxley, his testimony on every other point may be set aside also. For my part, I am inclined to accept this part of his tale. He is evidently a bigoted false witness, and dresses his facts with so many exaggerations that no details can be trusted. But his public

statement, made less than half a century after the suppression, that he drew his tale from widely circulated papers, must have had some foundation. Besides this, the story is not one that he would have been likely to have invented. The part taken from the Catholic histories does not harmonize with his accusation of imposture. Had he been a mere inventor of a story, he would more probably have said that the monks boasted that their wondrous crucifix fell from heaven, whereas a document had been found, when the papers of the abbey were seized, showing how it was bought from a clever carpenter. One thing, however, all must admit: had he produced a document containing the confession of the monks, or a record of their trial and conviction, it would have been much more to his purpose. But no such document was in existence.

### 5. Growth of the Marvel.

We may now pass on to other accusers and examine their evidence. Wriothesley, a Londoner and a contemporary, is a great approver of all Henry's proceedings. He was accustomed to set down things as he knew them, and is generally accurate as regards what fell under his own notice. His account is as follows :

This year in February there was an image of the crucifix of Christ, which had been used of long continuance for a great pilgrimage at the Abbey of Boxley, by Maidstone, in Kent, called the Rood of Grace, taken from thence and brought to the King at Westminster, for certain idolatry and craft that had been perceived in the said Rood. For it was made to move the eyes and lips by strings of hair, when they would show a miracle, and never



perceived till now. The Archbishop of Canterbury had searched the said image in his visitation, and so, at the King's commandment, was taken thence, that the people might leave their idolatry that had been there used.

I interrupt the narrative to observe that, though Wriothesley's description of the Rood, which he may have seen, is accurate, and corresponds with Jeffrey Chamber's account, he is misinformed as to what happened at Boxley. It was not the Archbishop who made the discovery, nor the King who ordered the removal. That the eyes and lips were moved "when they would show a miracle" is not the testimony of a witness, but an echo of the London talk and of the reports set afloat by Cromwell. He continues :

Also the said Rood was set in the market-place, first at Maidstone, and there showed openly to the people the craft of moving the eyes and lips, that all the people there might see the illusion that had been used in the said image by the monks of the said place of many years, time out of mind, whereby they had gotten great riches in deceiving the people, thinking that the said image had so moved by the power of God, which now plainly appeared to the contrary.

This, again, is the story as it reached London. But there is no proof of any kind that the miracles, for which the Rood was famous, had anything to do with the machinery. As to the great riches, an authentic document will be produced presently to show that the abbey was too poor to pay the subsidy in 1524, being much in debt. Shortly afterwards Wriothesley returns to the subject thus :

This year, the 24th day of February, being the Sunday of Sexagesima and St. Matthias-day, the image of the Rood

that was at the Abbey of Boxley was brought to Paul's Cross, and there at the sermon made by the Bishop of Rochester the abuses of the graces (? vices) and engines used in old times in the said image was declared, which image was made of paper and clouts from the legs upward; each leg and arms were of timber. And so the people had been deluded and caused to do great idolatry by the said image, of long continuance, to the derogation of God's honour and great blasphemy of the Name of God, as he substantially declared in his said sermon, by Scripture; and also how other images in the church, used for great pilgrimages, hath caused great idolatry to be used in this realm; and showed how he thinketh that the idolatry will never be left till the said images be taken away; and that the boxes that they have to gather the devotions of the people were taken away first, so that they should have nothing used to put the charity of the people in, but if there were any persons that would offer to such images that the said offering might be given incontinent to poor people; and that the people should be showed how they should offer no more to the said images. He doubted not but then in short time they would grant that the said images might be taken away.<sup>1</sup> . . . After that sermon was done, the Bishop took the said image of the Rood into the pulpit, and broke the vice of the same, and after gave it to the people again, and then the rude people and boys brake the said image in pieces, so that they left not one piece whole.<sup>2</sup>

This passage, besides the opinions of the preacher, and of his chronicler regarding idolatry, which are of no importance, tells us the nature of the Rood. It was of "paper and clouts," probably a rude kind of *papier mâché*. It gives us also the valuable information that the offerings of pilgrims were dropped into boxes (or trunks as they were sometimes called);

<sup>1</sup> A short passage follows regarding a relic at Hales, in Gloucestershire.

<sup>2</sup> *Chronicle*, i. 74—76. (Camden Society, 1875.)

and, if so, the exhibitors of the image, supposing there were such, of which there is no evidence, would not be able to know whether the offerings were great or small.

We may now pass on to another class of accusers and examine their evidence. Burnet writes :

The discovery of the cheats in images, and counterfeits in relics, contributed not a little to the monks' disgrace. Among them that of Boxley, in Kent, was one of the most enormous. Among the papers that were sent me from Zurich, there is a letter written by the minister of Maidstone to Bullinger that describes such an image (if it is not the same) so particularly that I have put it in the Collection.

The letter, written in ambitious Latin, was also printed by Colomies in his *Select Epistles of Illustrrious Men*, and by the late Mr. Gorham in his *Reformation Gleanings*. It is not found among the Zurich letters of the Parker Society. I give it in Mr. Gorham's literal translation :

The Azotic Dagon falls down everywhere in this country. That Babylonian Bel hath already been broken in pieces. There was lately discovered a wooden god of the Kentish folk, a hanging Christ, who might have vied with Proteus himself. For he was able most cunningly to nod with his head, to scowl with his eyes, to wag his beard, to curve his body, to reject and to receive the prayers of pilgrims. This (puppet) when the pious monks lost their craft, was found in their church, begirded with many an offering, enriched with gifts, linen, waxen, rural, oppidan and foreign. That energetic man, the brother of our Nicolas Partridge,<sup>1</sup> got scent of the cheat. He loosened

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gorham says, "Of Lenham, near Maidstone." Chamber in his letter to Cromwell takes all the credit of the discovery to himself, and does not even mention Partridge, while Wriothoesley attributes it to Cranmer.

him, fixed as he had been to the wall, from his pedestal. The artifices are disclosed, the wonderful and Polypean juggler is caught. Throughout his channeled body were hidden pipes, in which the master of the mysteries had introduced, through little apertures, a ductile wire; the passages being nevertheless concealed by thin plates. By such contrivances he had demented the people of Kent—aye, the whole of England—for several ages, with much gain. Being laid open he afforded a sportive sight, first of all to my Maidstonians,<sup>1</sup> exhibiting himself from a lofty platform to a crowded throng, some laughing heartily, some almost as mad as Ajax. The stroller was taken hence to London. He paid a visit to the Royal Court. This new guest salutes the King himself after a novel fashion. Courtiers, barons, dukes, marquises, earls swarm round him like bees. They come from a distance, stand around, stare and look him through and through. He acts, scowls with his eyes, turns his face away, distorts his nostrils, casts down his head, sets up a hump-back, assents and dissents. They stare, they deride, they wonder, the theatre rings with their voices, the shout flies into the sky. It is difficult to say whether the King was more pleased, on account of the detection of the imposture, or more grieved at heart that the miserable people had been imposed upon for so many ages. What need is there for so many words? The matter was referred to the Council. After a few days a sermon was preached by the Bishop of Rochester (John Hilsey). The Kentish Bel stands opposite to Daniel, erected on the upper part of the pulpit, so that he may be conveniently seen by all. Here again he opens himself, here again the player acts the part skilfully. They wonder, they are indignant, they stare, they are ashamed to find they have been so deluded by a puppet. Then when the preacher began to wax warm, and the Word of God to work secretly in the hearts of the hearers, the wooden trunk was hurled neck-over-heels among the most crowded of the audience. And now was heard a tremendous clamour of all sorts of people. He is snatched, torn,

<sup>1</sup> Why does Burnet call Hoker "Minister" of Maidstone in 1538?

broken in pieces bit by bit, split up into a thousand fragments, and at last thrown into the fire, and thus was an end of him.—John Hoker.

Other Calvinistic letters are preserved which show how the news reached the Continent, and though they add no real information, and cannot be quoted as testimony of witnesses, they are instructive as showing the growth of the lie.

William Peterson, who is living somewhere on the Continent, writes :

As to the news which you desire of me, I have not any, except that the images, which formerly used to work miracles in England, are now, as I hear, broken in pieces, and the imposture of the priests is made known to every one. And to mention to you one idol and imposture in particular, you must know that there was in England an image which at times used to move its mouth and eyes, to weep, and to nod in sign of dissent or assent before the bystanders. These things were managed by the ingenuity of the priests standing out of sight, but the imposture is now notorious to every person in England.<sup>1</sup>

Another Calvinist, named John Finch, also residing on the Continent, probably at Frankfort, writes to Strasburg :

A German merchant here, who is well acquainted with the English language, told me as a certain fact that all the images that used to work miracles by the artifice of the devil and his angels, that is to say the monks, friars, and fish-eaters, and others of that stamp, were conveyed on horseback to London, at the command of the Bishop ; that a public sermon was preached from the pulpit of St. Paul's to the congregation assembled in Christ ; after which a certain image, brought away from Kent, and called in English the Rood of Grace in Kent, was first exhibited.

<sup>1</sup> *Zurich Letters* (Parker Society), p. 664.

The preacher, the Bishop of Rochester, explained all the trickery and imposture in the presence of the people. By means of some person pulling a cord, most artfully contrived and ingeniously inserted at the back, the image rolled about its eyes just like a living creature; and on the pulling of other cords it gave a nod of assent or dissent according to the occasion. It never restored health to any sick person, notwithstanding great numbers afflicted with divers diseases were carried to it, and laid prostrate before it, unless some one disguised himself of set purpose, and pretended to be sick; in which case it would give a nod, as though promising the restoration of health, that it might by this means confirm its imposture. Then, again, by some contrivance unknown to me, it opened and shut its mouth; and to make an end of my story at once, after all its tricks had been exposed to the people, it was broken into small pieces.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, Nicholas Partridge, the brother of the famous discoverer of the "lying wonder," writes from Frankfort to his friend Bullinger :

A certain German, who belongs to one of the merchant companies residing in London, has told us some marvellous stories respecting some saints, which were formerly fixed and immoveable at some distance from London, namely, that they have now ridden to London, and performed most wonderful miracles in a numerous assembly. Concerning the bearded crucifix of Kent, called in our language the Rood of Grace near Maidstone, he told us that while the Bishop of Rochester was preaching at Paul's Cross to a most crowded congregation of nobility and others, in the presence too of many other famous saints of wood and stone, it rolled its eyes, foamed at the mouth, and poured forth tears down its cheeks. The Bishop had before thundered forth against these images. The satellite saints of the Kentish image acted in pretty much the same way. It is expected that the Virgin of Walsingham and St. Thomas of Canterbury, and likewise some other images

<sup>1</sup> *Zurich Letters*, p. 606.

will soon perform their miracles in the same place, which, of what character they are, you may, I think, judge for yourself. For the trickery of the wicked knaves was so publicly exposed in the image of the crucifix, that every one was indignant against the monks and impostors of that kind, and execrated both the idols and those who worshipped them.<sup>1</sup>

The foaming at the mouth and copious tears are picturesque additions to the other narratives.

There is one more contemporary document that must not be passed over. Cromwell kept in his pay certain scurrilous poets or rhymsters, whose business it was to write farces to be acted in the churches, and ballads to be sung in the ale-houses, in ridicule of whatever it pleased Henry and Cromwell to forbid, and of whomsoever it pleased them to defame. Foxe has preserved a long ballad, called the "Fantassie of Idolatry," in which, after scoffing at pilgrimages in general, the author thus alludes to the Rood of Boxley :

But now some may run, and when they have done  
 Their idols they shall not find ;  
 For the Rood of Grace hath lost his place  
 . . . . .  
 He was made to juggle ; his eyes would goggle,  
 He would bend his brows and frown,  
 With his head he would nod, like a proper young god,  
 The shafts would go up and down.<sup>2</sup>

Foxe, who has preserved this piece for us, and who wrote in Elizabeth's reign, follows in the steps of the Zurich letter writers, and even improves on them :

<sup>1</sup> *Zurich Letters*, p. 609.

<sup>2</sup> Foxe's *Martyrs*, v. 404. (Edit. 1838.) This ballad was composed at the time for Cromwell. Cromwell, as well as the Rood, "lost his place," and his head also, within two years of these sacrileges.

What posterity [he asks] will ever think the Church of the Pope, pretending such religion, to have been so wicked, so long to abuse the people's eyes with an old rotten stock called the Rood of Grace, *wherein a man should stand inclosed with a hundred wires within the Rood* to make the image goggle with the eyes, to nod with his head, to hang the lip, to move and shake his jaws according as the value was of the gift which was offered? If it were a small piece of silver, he would hang a frowning lip; if it were a piece of gold, then should his jaws go merrily. Thus miserably was the people of Christ seduced, their senses beguiled, and their purses spoiled, till this idolatrous forgery at last by Cromwell's means was disclosed, and the image with all his engines showed openly at Paul's Cross, and there torn in pieces by the people.<sup>1</sup>

It will be remembered that, according to Lambard, the Rood was not gigantic, but carried, cross and figure, on a horse's back. According to Foxe it is large enough to hold a man concealed within, with spy holes to watch the nature of the offerings, so as to know which of his hundred wires he is to pull. Hoker, the Maidstone man, knew nothing of this hollow body; with him the mechanism was worked from outside. Finch heard from his German merchant, just come from London, that "a cord was ingeniously inserted at the back," and the idol's accomplishments were confined to rolling the eyes, opening the mouth, and giving a nod or shake of the head. *Fama crescit eundo.*

The Rev. Canon Simpson, in his history of St. Paul's Cathedral, introduces the passage just given from Foxe, by the following words:

Foxe is seldom more in earnest than when he is denouncing some idolatrous superstition, and he has accord-

<sup>1</sup> Foxe, v. 397.



ingly something to say about this Rood of Boxley. The details, if true, are sad enough, as the records of what are called "religious" frauds always must be <sup>1</sup>

Yes! religious frauds are sad, and the frauds of lying historians, making false accusations of imposture and idolatry, are especially sad. But it may be questioned whether the "earnestness" of the old, fanatical, out-and-out liars like Foxe, is more sad than the refurbishing of these wicked calumnies, with the qualifying clause, "if true;" words which allow all the mischief intended by the first inventors of these charges to be repeated, and yet provide a convenient retreat in case of refutation. If Dr. Simpson believed Foxe's story, why did he express this doubt? If he had reason to doubt the truth of Foxe's details, was it not his duty as a historian either to clear up the matter, or to tell his reader, as Collier did, the reason of his hesitation, or else to pass the whole matter by in silence? Does either truth or charity permit the dissemination of scandal, with an affectation of wounded piety, and "'tis very sad if true"?

## 6. Were the Monks punished?

The third principal witness against the monks is William Thomas. He was quoted by Lord Herbert, and the notorious falsehoods in his account of St. Thomas of Canterbury awoke in the mind of Collier a suspicion that his testimony might not be of great value regarding the Rood of Boxley. This man was a kind of political tutor of Edward VI., and was made by him clerk of the Council. Though a layman,

<sup>1</sup> *Chapters in the History of Old St. Paul's*, by W. S. Simpson, D.D., F.S.A. (1881), p. 170.

he had benefices conferred on him. At the accession of Queen Mary he was deprived of his office, and in revenge sought to murder the Queen, for which he was sent to the Tower, February 21, 1554. On the 26th he attempted suicide, but failed. He was tried and condemned on May 9th, and executed at Tyburn on the 18th.<sup>1</sup>

He wrote at the beginning of Edward's reign a book called *The Pilgrim*, or *Il Pelerino Inglese*, in which he relates an imaginary conversation between himself and some Italian gentlemen during his residence in Italy. This book has been reprinted by Mr. Froude, the panegyrist of Henry VIII., and he expresses a hope that Englishmen "will welcome an opportunity of seeing the conduct of Henry VIII. as it appeared to an Englishman of more than common ability, who himself witnessed the scenes which he describes."<sup>2</sup> We do welcome the book, and think the champion worthy of his hero.

Mr. Thomas does not mention the Rood of Boxley by name. What he says is this :

Now, quoth I, hearken well unto me in this mine answer against miracles, and you shall hear things of another sort. In time past England hath been occupied with more pilgrimages than Italy hath now. For as you have here our Lady in so many places, di Loretto, di Gracia, &c., even so had we Our Lady of Walsingham, of Penrice, of Islington. . . . And so many Holy Roods, that it was a wonder. And here and there ran all the world ; yea, the King himself, till God opened his eyes, was as blind and obstinate as the rest. And those Roods and these our Ladies were all of another sort than these your saints be ;

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Antony Harmer (*i.e.*, Henry Wharton) in his corrections of Burnet, n. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Preface to *The Pilgrim*, p. 8.

for there were few of them, but that with engines that were in them could beckon either with their heads or hands, or move their eyes, or manage some part of their bodies to the purpose that the friars and priests would use them, and especially one Christ Italianate, that with the head answered yea and nay to all demands.<sup>1</sup>

There is a strange discrepancy between this and the preceding witnesses. With them the Rood of Boxley, the moving figure, was quite singular.<sup>2</sup> With Thomas he has become legion. *All* the Roods, *all* the Blessed Virgins, had machinery alike. It was the peculiar prerogative of England. As England surpassed Italy in saint-worship and shrine-haunting, so also in the marvels which moved so many devotees: "Those Roods and these our Ladies were all of another sort than those your saints be, for there were few of them but could beckon," &c. The man dared not accuse Italian monks of trickery, for the shrines and the roods were still standing in Italy, but he was at liberty to say what he liked of things destroyed and of men deprived and discredited. He betrays, however, the source of his absurd lies by the words, "*espccially* one Christ Italianate, that with the head answered yea and nay to all demands." But why especially this one Christ Italianate? No doubt he was referring to the Rood of Boxley; why called Italianate I do not know.<sup>3</sup> This Rood had become famous from having been brought to London

<sup>1</sup> *The Pilgrim*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Partridge indeed, above quoted, does say that the "satellite saints of the Kentish image," *i.e.*, the other images destroyed at St. Paul's, "acted pretty much in the same way." But his words are an evident flourish, and he was writing in Germany and for Germans.

<sup>3</sup> In any case, Italianate cannot mean, "contrived like Italian crucifixes," since Thomas says the Italians had no such roods as the English.

and solemnly destroyed. If there had been many like it, it would not have gained such notoriety.

"And here and there ran all the world," says Thomas; "yea, the King himself, till God opened his eyes, was as blind and obstinate as the rest." No doubt he was. And when and how did God open his eyes? When they saw "Gospel light" in the eyes of Anne Boleyn, according to the poet Gray. Or, to speak more precisely, it was when they saw the last hope quenched of obtaining from the Pope a sentence of divorce. His book of expenses bears witness that in 1529 "the King's perpetual candle was still burning before Our Lady of Walsingham at the cost of £2 3s. 4d., and in 1530 before King Henry of Windsor (Henry VI.) at the cost of £1."<sup>1</sup> Even in May, 1532, he thinks it right to send his offering of 7s. 6d. to Walsingham, and in November, 1532, he offers personally 11s. 3d. at the shrine of Our Lady of Boulogne, and 5s. to "Our Lady in the Wall" at Calais, and on his return from France 4s. 8d. to "Our Lady in the Rock" at Dover. Sir Harris Nicolas, who has edited the *Privy Purse Expenses of Henry*, on inspecting the gifts made by the King to his various favourites, exclaims that "the mind is impressed with horror at the reflection of how few of them escaped falling victims to his suspicion, jealousy, and revenge;"<sup>2</sup> and our Lady and the saints were no exception to this rule.

"And can you blame the King," continues Mr. Froude's "Englishman of more than common ability," "though he hanged and burned those hypocritical knaves that were authors and actors of so much

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers*, v. 303—336.

<sup>2</sup> Introduction, p. xxxi.

abomination and superstition?" This was well said by Mr. Thomas, and we must not pass it by too lightly. It was notorious in Italy that monks had been hung and burnt by Henry. The story of the hanging and quartering of the monks and friars who were associated with the visions and revelations of the Holy Maid of Kent, of the Carthusians and others who denied the King's supremacy, of the hanging and burning of Friar Forest, the confessor of the Queen, and of so many more, had quickly spread through Europe and excited among Catholics universal horror. William Thomas therefore tells the Italian gentlemen that these supposed martyrs were in reality hypocritical knaves, convicted of sacrilegious fraud. This is a barefaced but most instructive lie.

Had the Boxley monks really been guilty of cheating kings, nobles, and people out of their money, during long years, by gross and impious fraud, who can doubt that the Rood of Grace would have fed the flame which would have consumed them? Would the tyrant who, in 1534, sacrificed the lives of so many priests and monks on a charge of promulgating false visions, and who, in 1539, hung the mitred Abbot Richard Whiting of Glastonbury and two of his monks on a charge of having concealed some of the jewellery which the King claimed, would he or his minister Cromwell have spared the monks of Boxley in 1538?

But how stand the facts? Not one monk, either of Boxley or of any other abbey, was either executed, or convicted, or legally accused of fraud or trickery. Surely this one fact is enough to settle the whole

question. But the argument is not merely negative. The Abbot of Boxley, John Cobbe, received a pension of £50 a year (or £600 in modern value), and each of his nine monks a pension varying between four pounds and four marks.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the generous treatment of men who, according to the Rev. M. Soames, were guilty of "scandalous imposture and infamous frauds."<sup>2</sup> Perhaps it is needless after this to say that none of the impostors mentioned by John Finch, who were bribed by the monks to feign illness, and then to be miraculously cured before the Rood, were ever brought to justice. We may therefore conclude that if Cromwell thought it expedient to defame the monks, he did not find it convenient to have the charge too closely investigated. Let us return once more to the narration of William Thomas. We have seen how the murder of holy and innocent men was explained as

<sup>1</sup> The pensions are recorded by Willis, in his *Mitred Abbeyes*, ii. p. 96, by the editors of Dugdale, v. 460, and by Hasted in his *History of Kent*. None of these authors repeat the charge of the false miracles, though Hasted in a note refers to Lambard. The names are given incorrectly. I give them from the original.

In Record Office, Augmentation Office—Miscellaneous Books, No. 232. Enrolment of Pensions.

Pars. ii. Grants anno 29°.

F. 5.	Boxley.	Feb. 12. a°—29°.	
John Cobbes, Abb.	.	.	£50 0 0
John Graver	.	.	4 marcs.
Will Larkin	.	.	4 0 0
George Squyer	.	.	4 0 0
John Rede	.	.	4 marcs.
George Bonham	.	.	4 0 0
Amphiabel Mancorne	.	.	4 marcs.
Alexander Wymoneshunt	.	.	4 0 0
John Godfrey	.	.	4 marcs.
John Parker (Pakks)	.	.	4 marcs.

Some of the pensions were still paid in 1553.

<sup>2</sup> *History of the Reformation*, ii. 264.

just vengeance on hypocritical rogues. Of course, therefore, the suppression and plunder of the monasteries must also have its virtuous aspect.

And did not the King [asks his champion] do as good service unto God in destroying the places of these imaginary saints, that drew the people unto the belief and trust in these false miracles, as the good Hezekiah, King of Judah, did in destroying the Mosaical brazen serpent, and overthrowing the excelsa, the images and hallowed woods consecrated to their idols?"<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately for the justice of this comparison, neither the Books of Kings nor those of Chronicles relate that Ezechias established any Court of Augmentation to receive the proceeds of the high places and sacred groves. Much is told of the generosity of the holy King in restoring the splendour of the service of God ; but of King and courtiers enriched by confiscations, nothing. A fitter comparison would have been with Solomon falling under the influence of his idolatrous wives. "And the women turned away his heart, and when he was now old his heart was turned away by women to follow strange gods . . . and he worshipped Astarte, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Moloch, the idol of the Ammonites."<sup>2</sup> It was when Henry had given up his heart to voluptuousness that he destroyed the images of the Immaculate Virgin, whom he had once honoured. When rage and ferocity had changed his once genial character, he destroyed the Roods of our Divine Redeemer.

<sup>1</sup> *The Pilgrim*, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> 3 Kings xi. 4, 5.

### 7. Why was the Charge Believed?

A difficulty still remains. If there had been no imposture, how could Cromwell and Hilsey persuade the people that there had been such ; how could the Londoners and Maidstonians be aroused to such violent indignation ? I reply that in the first place there is no evidence that public opinion was thus aroused. Chamber's report to Cromwell on this point is not trustworthy. He was justifying his own conduct, and that of his employer, by claiming the sympathy of the people. Hoker says that when the Rood was shown at Maidstone, some laughed, but "other were as mad as Ajax." Yes, buffoonery, especially with sacred things, will always secure laughter in a ribald mob. But the better classes, the devout, the former pilgrims to Boxley, all who knew the true history of the Rood, were "mad" with anger, not against the monks, but against the exhibitors, for it is apparently Hoker's meaning that the "Papists" were mad with vexation, which simply means that they were indignant against the calumniators of the monks, the sacrilegious impostors, who, after driving the monks away, now insulted them. On the strength of Hoker's description, and without one particle of additional evidence, a writer in Knight's *London* says :

*People came from the most distant parts of the country, to gaze and wonder at a discovery, which no doubt astonished many of them almost as much as if it had been found out that any one of themselves was merely a similar piece of mechanism. The evidence, however, was too conclusive to be resisted by any possible stupidity.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Knight's *London*, vol. i. Art. "Paul's Cross."



So writes Mr. G. L. Craik, a name not unknown in literature : and yet all this is the merest nineteenth century fiction.

But, after all, supposing that the charge against the monks was believed at once, as it certainly was by the Protestants in the course of a few years, the credulity which accepted the false charge can be more easily explained, in accordance with the laws of human nature, than the credulity so freely imputed to the Catholics throughout England previous to the suppression of the abbeys. There is a choice of difficulties ; either Catholics had been gulled or Protestants have been bamboozled (one must be pardoned the words, there are no others). Of course Protestants think it natural that Catholics were dupes ; Catholics must be allowed to state and defend their own view. That the courtiers of Henry VIII. should have welcomed the exhibition of the crucifix, as Hoker relates, and should not have cared to examine too closely into the charge of imposture against the monks, is in perfect harmony with all history and experience. There is no sillier fiction about the middle ages than to represent the rich and noble grovelling at the feet of the clergy or the monks, either in admiration or in fear. Good monks were no doubt venerated by good laymen, but even saintly kings could make or relish a joke at the expense of imperfect monks, as they could be indignant against the bad. The ordinary run of nobles and men-at-arms had little enough reverence for men of peace and of religion. Mr. Gairdner writes :

Monks had, of course, their enemies like other men, and when the Court turned against them, private grudges,

Puritanism, and irreverence must have been alike highly gratified. It was a novel excitement for Londoners to see an image brought up from the country to be denounced by a bishop at Paul's Cross, where it stood as if doing open penance for the "abusion" of which it had been guilty. . . . It was Bishop Hilsey's task to sound the first blast of the trumpet against idolatry and superstition, so as to facilitate the spoliation of shrines for the increase of the Royal revenue.<sup>1</sup>

The passage quoted from William Thomas proves that the spirit of lying and calumniating the injured monks had taken possession of a great part of the nation in a very short time after the suppression. Every possessor of their lands, and every pilferer of their churches' ornaments, would be eager to quiet his conscience, or defend his conduct, by giving credence to the slanders.

It may be retorted that the first Protestants, who had known Catholics, nay, who had themselves been Catholics, were thoroughly convinced both of priestly knavery and lay credulity. In reply, I would challenge the production of one single testimony of a Protestant of those early days, declaring that *he himself* had once believed in moving images, and had afterwards discovered the imposture. Plenty of them thanked God that, having once believed in the Real Presence, or the Sacrifice of the Mass, their eyes had been at length opened to see the truth, and their hearts to bewail their former blindness. But in such a case the testimony is to a change of inward conviction as to a matter of faith. But where is one who says, "I was myself juggled by priests"? It is ever their lament that their neighbours were

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers*, xiii. Pref. pp. ix.—xi.

abused : that the "poor simple souls," or "the ignorant people," were deluded. In the passage I have quoted from Wriothesley, Barlow's sermon against images and feigned ceremonies is said to have been "to the great comfort of the audience ;" in other words, to the gratification of Pharisees who thanked God they were not ignorant, blinded Papists ; not "to the shame and confusion of the audience" convicted of having been themselves fools and idiots. Mr. Froude writes : "The virtues (of the famous roods and images) had begun to grow uncertain to sceptical Protestants, and from doubt to denial, from denial to passionate hatred, there were but a few steps." With this I cordially agree ; but I would add that from passionate hatred to the belief of calumnies, and even the invention of lies, is an easy advance. And it is this progression which explains the origin and the growth of the fable about Boxley.

A few months before Barlow's sermon, Gardiner who, whatever were his faults, was a shrewd observer, wrote as follows :

To a multitude persuaded in the destruction of images I would never preach. For (as Scripture willeth us) we should cast no precious stones before hogs. . . . It is a terrible matter to think that this false opinion conceived against images should trouble any man's head ; and such as I have known vexed with that devil (as I have known some) be nevertheless wonderfully obstinate in . . . and slander whatever is said to them for their relief.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Gardiner to Captain Vaughan, May, 1547.

### 8. Counter Evidence.

It is right now that, in conclusion, we should listen to some positive evidence in favour of the monks of Boxley. Surely Archbishop Warham cannot be objected to as biassed or ill-informed. He ruled the diocese of Canterbury for thirty years. In 1511, he made a personal visitation of all the monasteries. He was the intimate friend and patron of Erasmus, and knew all that Erasmus had written on the subject of pilgrimages and the monastic life. According to Erasmus, he had every episcopal virtue. He was not a man to countenance fraud. In that visitation he neither discovered nor suspected imposture or superstition. Again, in 1524, he was commissioned by the King to collect the subsidy granted by Convocation. He finds that the Abbot of Boxley has mismanaged his revenues and got his house into debt, and cannot pay the tax, though he offers security. Warham writes to Wolsey on the 3rd of May, 1524, to advise patience and forbearance. As the place is much sought from all parts of the realm, visiting the Rood of Grace, he would be sorry to put it under an interdict. The Abbot is inclined to live precisely (*i.e.*, economically), and bring the place out of debt, "or else it were a pity he should live much longer, to the hurt of so holy a place, where so many miracles be showed."<sup>1</sup>

Let men think as they please as to the reality of the miracles here referred to, to me at least it is absolutely incredible that by miracles Warham

<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Papers*, iv. 127.

means the movement of the eyes or head of the crucifix. Those who will may class Warham also among the dupes of a bit of wooden mechanism, if they are ashamed to place him among abbots and others "in high station," who, according to Dr. Hook, laughed and connived at the frauds practised by their inferiors.<sup>1</sup> Let them then have the satisfaction of reflecting how God hid these things from the pious and cultivated Warham; from the learned and saintly Fisher; and even from the penetration of Colet and Erasmus; while He revealed them to the arch-knave Thomas Cromwell, the perjured Archbishop Cranmer, the time-serving Hilsey, the debauched and bloodthirsty Henry, and the would-be murderer and suicide, William Thomas. And while they rejoice over the enlightenment and spiritual insight of the men who destroyed our abbeys, and stripped our cathedrals naked, let them sigh or make merry over the thought that the builders of them were given up, generation after generation, to gross and besotted idolatry.

### 9. Conclusion.

Nothing is more common than the use of the word "lie" by authors treating of revolt against the Catholic Church. "That a Lie cannot be believed, philosophism knows only this," writes Carlyle of the French Revolution;<sup>2</sup> and this Lie, with a capital letter, is of course the Catholic doctrine. And Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hook speaks too highly both of Warham and Fisher to have been willing to connect them with the supposed knavery at Boxley. However, they must have been either knaves or dupes, for they were both neighbours of the monks, and Warham was their diocesan.

<sup>2</sup> Part I. bk. i. c. 2.

Froude, following his master's lead, writes of the first Protestants in England that they were "men and women to whom the masses, the pilgrimages, the indulgences, the pardons, the effete paraphernalia of the establishment, had become intolerable; who had risen up in blind resistance, and had declared with passionate anger that, whatever was the truth, all this was falsehood."<sup>1</sup> He calls them "a little band of enthusiasts, armed only with truth and fearlessness;"<sup>2</sup> who, having at last read for themselves the Gospel history, "believed in Christ, not in the bowing Rood," so that "thenceforward neither form nor ceremony should stand between them and their God."<sup>3</sup> All this sounds no doubt very brave and very noble. But what if "the bowing Rood," so skilfully thrown in here for the confusion of the ancient Church, is after all a Lie, a Lie deserving of very conspicuous capitals, but a lie first invented cunningly and knowingly by those first Protestants, and since then manipulated and multiplied and propagated by their successors, during three centuries and a half, not indeed with the same full consciousness, yet with blindness and recklessness and eagerness, which are in ill harmony with such grand professions of devotion to the truth!

I trust that this lie will soon go the way of other calumnies. And that I may show that I have no animosity to Dean Hook, I will draw the moral of the whole story by employing his own words on an analogous charge—words that do him credit:

Among the falsehoods freely circulated [he says] were those which related to the existence of underground

<sup>1</sup> *History*, ii. c. vi. p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 36.

passages leading from priories to nunneries, for the clandestine convenience of those who hated the light because their deeds were evil. But this application of the sewers, which are found upon examination to have gone no further than the exigencies of draining required, is now known to have originated in men who, whatever may have been their zeal against Popery, had forgotten that among deadly sins, falsehood is one, and that among Christian virtues, the charity that thinketh no evil is the first.<sup>1</sup>

The sewers, it seems, have been dug up, and the discovery of the cesspools has checked the further wanderings of the Protestant imagination in that direction. It is to be hoped that some day it will escape from the monastic dungeons and hollow statues in which it has been so long imprisoned.

### **Postscript—A Rejoinder.**

I am sorry that I have not succeeded in convincing Mr. Cave-Brown of the innocence of the Boxley monks, as regards the imposture so commonly attributed to them.<sup>2</sup> But I am still more sorry to find that he regards this as a party-question, and not as one purely historical. Notwithstanding his own attachment to Protestant doctrine and discipline, I should have expected that his general candour, and even a certain good-will which he manifests towards monastic institutions (in former ages at least), would have led him to listen gladly to an attempt to vindicate the integrity of the monks in a particular case; and that if, after carefully weighing my arguments, he felt compelled to believe in their guilt, he would have expressed regret rather than triumph.

<sup>1</sup> *History*, ii. c. vi. p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> See an account of his book in my Preface.

I find to my surprise that he assumes a tone towards me as if I were a controversial partisan or antagonist. "But what," he asks,<sup>1</sup> "has the Romanist himself to say in defence or justification of these practices? The latest champion of the cause is the author of a work entitled *Blunders and Forgeries*," &c., and then he goes on to take me to task, and to lecture me on the tone in which I have written.

Now let me ask; why "the Romanist"? What has Rome, or communion with Rome, to do with this matter? I am an Englishman, and I feel a special interest in Kent, because I was educated for several years at the Grammar School of Tunbridge. As an Englishman, and to a certain extent a man of Kent, I would rather not believe in sacrilegious imposture, practised by a large number and long succession of Englishmen and men of Kent, unless I am compelled by evidence; and in this case I hold that there is no evidence whatever.

"What has the Romanist to say in defence or justification of these practices?" I reply that I have not a word to say, nor have I said a word, in defence of any practices. I have simply denied their existence. Did I believe in them I should deplore them, and condemn them, as cordially and strongly as Mr. Cave-Brown, or any Protestant.

Why, again, am I called "the latest champion of the cause"? Of what cause? Does he mean the cause of monachism? The monastic life will still be holy, though the Boxley monks were cheats, just as marriage is holy, though Henry VIII. was an adulterer and a wife-slayer. Or does Mr. Cave-

<sup>1</sup> P. 65.



Brown imagine that I, or any other "Romanist," can identify the cause of the Catholic Church, or (if he prefer the expression) of Roman Catholicism, with the innocence of the monks of Boxley? I am quite free to admit that there have been in the history of the Church cases of proved imposture, of women who have simulated the stigmata, and, as Sir Thomas More tells us in his Dialogue, of monks who have had recourse to abominable trickery for abominable ends.<sup>1</sup> My *cause* compels me to execrate such men and women, as St. Paul execrated and wept over those Christians in the Apostolic Church, who made a god of their belly and gloried in their shame.

If I have no cause to defend which is bound up with the monks' innocence, has Mr. Cave-Brown identified his cause with that of the monks' guilt? I do not accuse him of this, for he speaks candidly enough on certain matters. He attributes the suppression of the monasteries in general to the avarice of Henry VIII. "The King and his courtiers," he writes, "having tasted the sweets of the confiscated lands, greedily demanded more. Before the year 1537, the order had gone forth which doomed every monastery and nunnery in the kingdom to appropriation, and to give a specious air of legality to the proceedings, the Court of Augmentation was formed to receive and take charge of the proceeds of the King's revenues."<sup>2</sup> And as regards Boxley Abbey, Mr. Cave-Brown bids us remember that it was not the discovery of fraud

<sup>1</sup> Individuals, however, not whole communities, or successive generations, as supposed in the Boxley case.

<sup>2</sup> P. 58.

and jugglery that led to the suppression of the abbey, but the suppression of the abbey that led to the discovery of the jugglery—I should rather say to its invention. Surely then Mr. Cave-Brown and I can discuss the innocence or guilt of the monks without any heat of controversial spirit.

Yet he seems to wish to make me a controversialist against my will. He rebukes me, if I understand him aright, for refusing to see any point of theology involved in the Boxley question. "He (*i.e.*, Mr. Bridgett) candidly avows his opinion that the miracles wrought or graces obtained before this crucifix had nothing whatever to do with the movements so suggestively made. Surely such a denial, or minimizing of the claims of relics to thaumaturgic power would be a conceding the soundness of one of the main positions taken by the English Reformers, and a virtual stultifying one of the most attractive and effective pretensions of the Church of Rome."<sup>1</sup> I think Mr. Cave-Brown must have misunderstood my meaning. The Rood of Boxley was called the Rood of Grace, doubtless because *graces* were supposed to have been received by those who honoured it. In Catholic language "a grace," in this connection, is an extraordinary favour, spiritual or material, sometimes though not necessarily miraculous, granted in answer to prayer. Mr. Cave-Brown seems to think that the Boxley graces consisted in the opening or closing of the eyes of the image, the lowering or raising of the lower jaw. Now I have said that there is no evidence of any kind that this image, though contrived in the

<sup>1</sup> P. 65.

way just mentioned, was ever used in that way. The mechanism was found rusty and out of order at the dissolution, the abbot and monks professed to be ignorant of its existence. They were accused in general of having played tricks, but no instance was proved against them, and they received valuable pensions. But even supposing that the crucifix had, at some previous date, been used mechanically, the mechanical motions could not have been made to pass for miracles; first, because they were of so simple a nature, that every one would suspect mechanism, and for that reason Protestants, who accuse the monks of imposture, have been obliged to suppose much more subtle contrivances, such as smiles and frowns and tears. Secondly, the monks could not at the same time call the motions miraculous, and put about papers, as Lambard says they did, declaring that the motions were *not* miraculous, but contrived by the carpenter who first brought the image to the abbey. The graces then were something quite different from movements of the Rood. Finch says they were of the nature of bodily cures. He merely denies that the cures were authentic. He pretends that impostors were hired by the monks to sham illness, and then to sham cure. This is his theory, but there is no proof of it. No impostor was either convicted or charged. I have then no thought of denying the "thaumaturgic power" of the Rood of Boxley, or of minimizing it. I make no concession to the English Reformers. But I deny all connection between the title Rood of Grace and its mechanical properties, the existence of which I have duly accounted for.

Mr. Cave-Brown says that my strictures on Lambard are "quibbles, quirks, and cavils." The reader may judge for himself. He says I have not cross-examined the witnesses against the monks. I think I have done it effectually. The reader may judge. In fine, he accuses me of "putting the witnesses in my pillory and pelting them with the choicest epithets I can command," and of doing this instead of refuting them. I must again ask the reader to refer to my Essay; he will find that the epithets complained of are used after a thorough examination and refutation of all charges, when I contrast the character of the accusers with that of the witnesses to the good fame of the monks of Boxley. It may be, as Mr. Cave-Brown says, an old rule of sharp lawyers. "No case; abuse the plaintiff's witnesses;" but that saying cannot justly be reversed, so as to imply that when an advocate appeals to the notorious or proved infamy of the witnesses, he thereby acknowledges that he has no case. The records of our law-courts, in many celebrated trials of late years, show that the most famous and honourable advocates, when dealing with the evidence of proved forgers and perjurers, have not thought that the strength of their case required that they should be unimpassioned in denouncing such accusers. Mr. Cave-Brown writes as if I had vituperated the monks' accusers with random epithets, or railed at them simply because they have accused the Boxley monks. But all the epithets I have used are founded on their notorious characters. I call Thomas Cromwell an arch-knave, Cranmer perjured, William Thomas a would-be murderer, and Henry debauched and

bloodthirsty. These words have been used by many a Protestant before me, and I am quite justified in calling attention to the well-known characters of the accusers, after I have weighed and refuted their evidence. In the second place, does not Mr. Cave-Brown put the monks in *his* pillory, quoting against them the railing accusations of Lambard and others? If the monks were impostors they deserve the pillory, and Mr. Cave-Brown is right. Henry, Cromwell, and Cranmer deserve the pillory in any case; but if they were also false accusers, as I contend, they merit to be pelted with stronger epithets than I have applied to them.

I have called Henry bloodthirsty, because of the murders of More and Fisher, the Carthusians, Margaret of Salisbury and the rest of his victims, not because he slaughtered the monks of Boxley. No, these monks he merely calumniated and pensioned. But am I wrong in thinking that a man who could shed blood, as Henry did, was capable of calumniating? Or that a man who was greedily avaricious, as Mr. Cave-Brown declares, would laugh at any buffoonery played off on those he had plundered? But when Mr. Cave-Brown made up his mind that the monks were sacrilegious villains, had he any well-founded presumption against them? Were they dissolute and immoral? Had they given up all monastic discipline? Are they convicted on other and independent grounds of avarice? No; according to the evidence which Mr. Cave-Brown has collected, they were of good fame, of strict life, of industrious habits. He speaks indeed more than once in a vague way of the spirit of greed that must

have led to their frauds, and of the riches they must have accumulated ; but the facts he gives tend the other way. The abbots had got into debt before the suppression, but not by squandering their substance in riotous living. It was by being too easy-going landlords, accepting a nosegay of gillyflowers or roses instead of substantial payment in coin or grain.<sup>1</sup> Is it fair then towards men who were never put on their trial, and against whom no other charge is made, to believe them guilty of horrible crimes, repeated generation after generation, except on overwhelming evidence? Surely not. Now Mr. Cave-Brown has brought no new facts which I have not discussed. I may then leave my paper to the dispassionate judgment of my readers ; and my trust is that Mr. Cave-Brown's History of Boxley will not succeed in fixing on the monks the stigma of a crime, which Hasted, the historian of Kent, evidently thought unproved, and passed over in silence, and which Mr. Gairdner clearly attributes to the inventive genius of Henry's vicar-general, Thomas Cromwell. Finally, I would ask all candid men to note who were the defenders, who the opponents of "image-worship," in the days of Henry VIII. Foremost among the defenders was Sir Thomas More, the most enlightened man of his age ; while the man who first conceived the plan of accusing the Boxley monks of imposture was Geoffry Chamber, one of the jurymen who, against all evidence, brought the infamous verdict of guilty against Sir Thomas More, and so fitted himself to be a tool of Thomas Cromwell.

<sup>1</sup> P. 62.

# The First Experiment in Civil and Religious Liberty.

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BY JAMES CARMONT.

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AMONG the many benefits which Protestantism claims to have conferred upon the world is that of having procured for mankind its first experience of civil and religious liberty, as practised in this nineteenth century. Protestants have repeated this fiction to themselves and to their neighbours so often and so confidently, that it is little matter for surprise that they should, by mere force of repetition, have acquired a firm conviction of its truth. George IV. is said to have asserted so frequently that he was present at the Battle of Waterloo, and in command of a brigade there, that he ended in believing his own story, and so thoroughly that he, on one occasion at least, even ventured to appeal to the Duke of Wellington for confirmation of its accuracy. In like manner, Protestants do not hesitate to appeal even to Catholics, who have had, in times past, such hard experience of Protestant toleration, and they are hurt at our ingratitude, and surprised at our prejudice, if we venture to call in question the truth of their allegation. Too frequently, indeed, through want of definite information on the subject, Catholics allow the claim to pass unchallenged ; they content themselves with

imitating the courtier-like reply of the Iron Duke to the appeal of His Majesty as to whether he was not present at the famous battle, "Sire, I have often heard you say so." With similar evasions Catholics not unfrequently allow the claim to hold the field, and suffer their Protestant friends to remain undisturbed in their delusion.

The assertion goes, of course, much further than we have stated. Not only do Protestants pose as the friends—the original, steady, and consistent friends—of civil and religious liberty, but they maintain with cool assurance that we Catholics have always been, and are, under all circumstances and conditions of society, its enemies. George IV. was content to assert his own presence at Waterloo, and his right to a share in the glory of the world-famous battle. He never ventured to call in question the Duke's position as leader in the field. By their opponents, Catholics are not merely refused the credit of being participators in the struggle for civil and religious liberty, but they are represented as fighting under the enemy's flag—nay, more, they are the enemy themselves. To support this charge on Catholics and their religion, every field of attack has been explored, and only too frequently the sources of information have been poisoned. In the field of history, for example, the foolish, rash, or criminal acts of Catholics, or professing Catholics—no matter how repugnant to other Catholics, better and wiser than they—are skilfully represented as necessary and inevitable consequences of their religious belief. In particular, no pains have been spared to strengthen the chain of evidence by which Catholics are to be convicted of being, under



all circumstances, the enemies, and Protestants exhibited as the friends, of civil and religious liberty. In this paper we propose to show, and that chiefly on the testimony of Protestant or non-Catholic writers of acknowledged competence and impartiality, that the popular verdict ought to be reversed—that when the altered circumstances of the world seemed to render a change necessary, the first application of the principle in question was made, not among the Protestants of Germany, the Covenanters of Scotland, or the Puritans of England or America, all of whom have been praised in turn as its authors in their respective countries, but in a humble settlement projected and organized by a handful of poor despised English Catholics in the reign of Charles I.—and that the experiment was successfully carried out among them as long as they were permitted to conduct it.

The man to whom the credit of the undertaking is due, is George Calvert, Lord Baltimore, the founder of what has not unfairly been called the Catholic State of Maryland, from the prominence which Catholics enjoyed in it. It is matter for regret that the public has hitherto remained too little acquainted with the interesting work to which he and his sons, Cecil and Leonard, devoted their lives. George Calvert was born at Ripley in Yorkshire in the year 1582, as the long reign of the last of the Tudors was drawing to its gloomy close. He was educated at Oxford, and, after taking his degree, spent a considerable time in foreign travel. On his return to England he entered political life ; sat in Parliament for his native county of York, received the honour

of knighthood, and afterwards, under the patronage of Sir Robert Cecil, became one of the two Secretaries of State for the Kingdom, and a member of the Privy Council. His literary ability was considerable, and several of his works in Latin and English, on moral, political, and social subjects have been preserved to our own day to testify to it. His capacity for business and his industry were acknowledged on all hands. Possessed of these advantages, and placed in a position in which they were not likely to miss their reward—enjoying the favour of his Sovereign and the good opinion of the world—who can say to what heights of prosperity Calvert might not have risen, but for one fatal barrier to his success? In the early part of the seventeenth century, the suppression of the Catholic Church in England—a work of force and fraud—was only a recently accomplished fact. The numerous conversions to the Catholic Church which took place under Elizabeth, show that under an exterior of ashes the embers of the old faith still glowed with life and heat, and that but slight exertion was needed to kindle them into flame. Calvert had travelled much, had seen the Catholic religion in its centre of unity, and had associated with its adherents. He had been dismayed at the proteus-like aspects of Protestantism, and the numberless divisions into which it had already split, made him doubt the purity of its origin, and despair of its future. Once convinced, he suffered no worldly obstacles to bar his path of duty, but returned to the faith of his fathers, abandoning in the prime of life the brilliant career which had just opened before him. Though by doing so he did not altogether

forfeit the favour of his Sovereign, it was clear that from the time Sir George Calvert became a Catholic, his political career, lately so promising, was ended. He still, however, retained his place in the Privy Council, and was advanced to the dignity of an Irish Peerage, under the title of Lord Baltimore, of Baltimore, in County Longford.

While the sunshine of political prosperity still shone upon him, Calvert had taken great part in promoting the movement which impelled so many Englishmen to leave their native land to try their fortunes amid the trackless wilds of America, of which, although more than one hundred years had passed since its discovery, little more was then known than the seaboard, and even that imperfectly. He had been a member of the great Company which colonized Virginia, and while Secretary of State he had obtained a patent, or grant, of Avalon, the southern promontory of Newfoundland. Those who have related the story of his life tell of the generosity with which he lavished his extensive fortune in promoting the interests of the settlement entrusted to him, of his care in selecting emigrants, and of the diligence and kindness with which he endeavoured to instil into them principles of industry, economy, and order. But the climate was found to be colder and the soil less fruitful than his agents had represented them to be—earlier colonists were jealous of the privileges which had been accorded to him—the English possessions were menaced by the French, who held the adjoining territories, and though he appears to have acted with becoming vigour, and to have gallantly repelled by force at arms the

attacks made upon his settlement, he found his hopes of success doomed to disappointment. He thereupon resolved to try whether, in the richer country which lay towards the sunny South, a more successful attempt might not be made to found a settlement in which he might not only employ his great wealth, but establish for himself and his suffering co-religionists a place of refuge from the persecution which had become chronic in England.

He first turned his attention to the vast Province of Virginia, the original charter for which had recently been cancelled by James I., and he visited that State in person in the year 1629, in order to see what prospects it afforded for establishing a settlement. Land there was in abundance, and settlers were few, but with these few, Protestant intolerance had already entered, and Lord Baltimore and his followers were, as a condition of settling, confronted with the oath of allegiance to the King, and of his supremacy in matters temporal and spiritual, couched in terms which no Catholic could accept. It was in vain that Lord Baltimore offered to pledge himself by a form of oath which a Catholic might take with a safe conscience, and in vain, too, he pointed out that in attempting to force the obnoxious oath upon him, the authorities of Virginia were exceeding the powers committed to them by law. The opposition was too strong, and, foiled in his attempt, Lord Baltimore returned to England.

But time and experience had in the meantime enabled him to mature a bolder scheme. The oppression from which Catholics suffered weighed upon his mind, and he conceived the generous idea

of undertaking an enterprise which should relieve their sufferings, and at the same time extend the power and influence of the English nation. Other peoples of Europe had begun to scramble for the rich provinces which lay open to the enterprise of their adventurous subjects, and it was not difficult for a man of the high character of Lord Baltimore, to obtain from King Charles, who had then newly succeeded to the throne of England, a charter of the territory to the north-east of Virginia, which afterwards received the name of Maryland, in compliment, it is understood, to Charles' newly-married Queen, Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV. of France.

By the Charter, the extensive territory was to be held of the Crown, by the tenure of fealty only, for the singular payment of a yearly rent of "two Indian arrows of those parts, every year on Easter Tuesday," and one-fifth part of all the gold and silver ore which might be discovered within the domain.<sup>1</sup> To the emigrants was secured an independent share in the legislation of the province, the statutes of which were to be established by the advice and approbation of its freemen or their deputies. Provision was made for representative government, and it was enacted that the authority of the proprietary should not extend to the life, the freehold, or the estate of the colonists.

Christianity was made the law of Maryland, but to no sect of Christians was given predominance or pre-eminence over another, and to each man was religious freedom secured, as well as civil liberty. The province was exempted for ever from English taxation, and so absolute was the freedom accorded

<sup>1</sup> Hazard, i. 327.

to it, that neither was recourse to the English King necessary for confirmation of the Acts or deeds of the Legislature, nor was it even required that when passed or enacted, these should be intimated to him. Such was the Charter, the like of which had never before passed the Great Seal of England, obtained by the Catholic founder of the settlement of Maryland; such were the provisions which, it is believed, were penned by Lord Baltimore himself. Surely they merit the warmest recognition in our democratic days, as the first successful attempt to introduce a new principle of civil government suited to the altered circumstances of the world.

Let us hear the terms in which it is described by Bancroft, the eminent historian of the United States, and the warm admirer and apologist of the Puritans of New England :

Calvert deserves to be ranked among the most wise and benevolent lawgivers of all ages. He was the first in the history of the Christian world to seek for religious security and peace by the practice of justice, and not by the exercise of power; to plan the establishment of popular institutions with the enjoyment of liberty of conscience. . . . The asylum of Papists was the spot where, in a remote corner of the world, on the banks of rivers which as yet had hardly been explored, the mild forbearance of a proprietary adopted religious freedom as the basis of the State.<sup>1</sup>

Testimony such as this is too important to be overlooked, in discussing the claim of Protestantism to have been the first to recognize the altered conditions of society into which the world had entered, and to inaugurate a new departure suited to the times.

The Charter was nearly completed when, on June 20, 1632, Lord Baltimore died, leaving a name

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, *History of United States*, c. vii. 185.

which the breath of slander had hardly dared to sully. The high regard in which he had been held by the King, rendered it an easy matter for his son Cecil, second Lord of the name, to procure the Charter designed for his father. Cecil was a worthy inheritor of the estimable qualities of his parent, but whether he did not possess the same enterprising disposition, or sufficient physical strength, he does not appear to have ever visited the colony over whose fortunes he never ceased to watch with paternal solicitude. The most probable explanation is, that in those troublous times, when Catholics were exposed to so many risks, it was absolutely necessary for the safety of the settlement, that it should have a protector at home to ward off the dangers to which, as we shall find, its existence was continually exposed. He committed the active management of the enterprise to his younger brother Leonard, whom he appointed Governor of Maryland, and who fully and ably fulfilled the trust committed to him, till his death in 1647.

The Charter being sealed, and all preparations made, the enterprise being favoured by the suspension of the statutes which restrained emigration from England, it may readily be supposed that, harassed and persecuted as Catholics had been during the last two reigns, it could not be a difficult matter to find a sufficient number of them ready to avail themselves of any means of escape from the grinding tyranny which had crushed them to the earth. A company numbering about two hundred, chiefly, but not exclusively, Catholics, was gathered together, and sailed from Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, on

November 22, 1633. Among the party we find the names of Gerard, Winter, Wiseman, Green, Fairfax, Baxter, Hill, and others, so often repeated in the lists of "Popish recusants" under Elizabeth and James. The vessel which bore them from the shores of their native land was named the *Ark and Dove*, a title appropriate to a band of exiles seeking a place of refuge, in which they might forget the troubles that had driven them from their native land. The course which the vessel took would, in our days, be considered a strange one. Instead of boldly steering to the West, they sailed by the Azores, and thence by Barbadoes and St. Christopher's to the shores of Virginia. It is highly illustrative of the persecutions to which Catholics were exposed in those unhappy times, that the emigrants, on touching at Montserrat, found there a colony of Irishmen who had been exiled from Virginia on account of their religion.

The expedition arrived off Point Comfort towards the end of February, 1634, after a prosperous voyage. Entering Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River in search of a suitable place whereon to found a settlement, they anchored off a small Indian town called Joamaco, on the St. Mary's River. Meeting with a friendly reception from the natives, Calvert soon came to an amicable arrangement with them, obtaining from them at once one-half of their town, and a promise to surrender the other half later in the season, when they had completed their arrangements for withdrawing further inland, which for other reasons they had already resolved to do. Landing with his followers on March 25, 1634, Leonard



Calvert entered upon the territory granted to his brother, and took possession "for our Saviour, and for our Sovereign Lord the King of England."

The following extract from a letter written by Father Andrew White, one of the Jesuit missionaries who accompanied the settlers in their search for a new home, will be read with interest, as showing the dispositions in which the Catholic portion of them commenced their new career.

On the day of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Virgin Mary [writes Father White] we celebrated on this Island [namely, on a small place called St. Clement's Island], the first Mass which had been ever offered up in this part of the world. After we had completed the Sacrifice, we took upon our shoulders a great cross which we had shaped out of a tree, and advancing in order to the appointed place, with the assistance of the Governor and his associates and the other Catholics, we erected a trophy to Christ, the Saviour, humbly reciting on our bended knees the Litanies of the Holy Cross, with great emotion.

The little Indian town was made the seat of the Colonial Assembly, and the name "St. Mary's" given to it, shows the Catholic instinct which animated the settlers, and prompted them to place their enterprise under the patronage of the "Help of Christians." Peace and good fortune smiled upon the rising colony—the emigrants came at a season suited to their enterprise—the rich land yielded them abundant crops of corn, and their new-found Indian friends instructed the wives of the colonists in the art of making Indian bread, while their husbands were taught the Indian ways of trapping game, which swarmed in abundance in the trackless forest. After a few months, it could be said that the prosperity

of Maryland had advanced as much as that of Virginia had done in as many years.

And here we may point out how pleasantly the conduct of the colonists of Maryland contrasts with that of a Puritan band, which about the same time landed at Salem, in Massachusetts. Peace and harmony reigned among the former, in spite of the religious differences which existed among them. Of the two hundred who landed at Salem, all were Protestants without exception, and that moreover of a pronounced type, who had contended zealously for what they called religious freedom. Hardly had they landed to make their thanksgiving for a prosperous voyage, when "religious" strife began. The Book of Common Prayer was then, as now, a rock of offence to the extremists of the party. By some it was unsparingly condemned. Others were strongly attached to its use in forms of worship to which they had been accustomed from their childhood, and they refused to give it up at the bidding of prejudiced fanaticism. The upholders of the Prayer Book were the weaker party. They were censured, denounced, and for the most part terrified into silence. Their leaders, whose conscientious convictions were too strong to be overcome, and who could not be forced into submission, were treated like criminals, seized and shipped back to England, there to consider whether the intolerance of the Church of England, or that of Puritan zealots, was the harder to bear.

But troubles soon disturbed the peace of Maryland. The evil genius of the colony was, undoubtedly, a certain Captain William Clayborne, a highly-placed official of the State of Virginia. There, as

in later times, officials enriched themselves not so much by the emoluments of office, as by their perquisites, and the opportunities for trade which their position afforded them. Before the arrival of Leonard Calvert in Maryland, Clayborne had obtained a provincial commission to trade with the Indians, and to explore Chesapeake Bay. He had planted an establishment in the Isle of Kent, in the heart of the province, and in virtue of this irregular settlement he contested the right of Lord Baltimore to that island and to other parts of Maryland. Resting as it did on Royal patent, Lord Baltimore's right was undoubtedly superior to that of Clayborne, whose position was more that of a private adventurer. Still, being a man of great determination of character and apparently conceiving himself to have suffered wrong, he waged determined war against Lord Baltimore's rights, and involved the rising settlement in disorder and bloodshed during a long series of years.

Availing himself of the prejudices which existed in the minds of the natives against the Spaniards, he first attempted to deprive the settlers of the confidence of the Indians, by representing to them that their new friends were of that nation, and would soon practise upon them the cruelties which had made the name of Spaniard hated and feared throughout America. The religion of the colonists gave some colour to the slander, and the simple Indians silently withdrew from their neighbourhood, leaving the settlers perplexed and alarmed at their desertion. It was not long, however, till the natives found that they had been deceived, and the former friendly relations were soon re-established. Clayborne

then had recourse to arms, but the Governor having assembled a superior force, defeated the insurgents, took several prisoners, and denounced their leader as a pirate. Clayborne escaped, and made his way to England, where, having influential friends ready to take up any story to the disadvantage of Catholics, he nearly succeeded in stirring up mischief. King Charles, however, on becoming acquainted with the true circumstances of the case, dismissed the complaints, and for some years Maryland obtained peace, and was blest with prosperity. Here is the testimony which Bancroft bears to the state of Maryland in 1642, eight years after its first settlement :

Maryland in that day was unsurpassed for happiness and liberty. Conscience was without restraint ; a mild and liberal proprietary conceded every measure which the welfare of the colony required : domestic union, a happy concert between all the branches of government, an increasing emigration, a productive commerce, a fertile soil which Heaven had richly favoured with rivers and deep bays, united to perfect the scene of colonial felicity and contentment. Ever intent on advancing the interests of his colony, Lord Baltimore invited the Puritans of Massachusetts to emigrate to Maryland, offering them lands and privileges and free liberty of religion, but Gibbons, to whom he had awarded a commission, was so wholly tutored in the New England discipline, that he would not advance the wishes of the Irish peer.<sup>1</sup>

From the first the principle adopted by Lord Baltimore, in the settlement and administration of his province, had been that of strict impartiality towards every sect or denomination of Christians. There was freedom for every law-abiding citizen, and every one was secured in the free exercise of his

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, c. vii. 191.

religion, as well as in the possession of his freehold. The testimony given on this point by the historian, whose words we have already cited, are so important and emphatic that we need hardly apologize for quoting him again :

But far more memorable was the character of the Maryland institutions. Every other country in the world had persecuting laws. "I will not," such was the oath for the Governor of Maryland, "I will not by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, molest any person professing to believe in Jesus Christ for, or in respect of religion." Under the mild institutions and munificence of Baltimore, the dreary wilderness soon bloomed with the swarming life and activity of prosperous settlements. The Roman Catholics who were oppressed by the laws of England were sure to find a peaceful asylum in the quiet harbours of the Chesapeake ; and *there, too, Protestants were sheltered against Protestant intolerance.*<sup>1</sup>

To promote emigration to his colony, Lord Baltimore offered land-grants on the most extensive scale—for example, to each adventurer who should bring into his province in the year 1633 five men aged between sixteen and fifty, 2,000 acres of land of English measure, for the yearly rent of 400 lbs. of wheat ; to each adventurer bringing ten men in the years 1634 and 1635, the like extent of 2,000 acres of land, for the yearly rent of 600 lbs. of wheat ; and to each adventurer who should bring five men in any year after 1635, 1,000 acres for the yearly rent of 20s., to be paid in the commodities of the country ; while to single adventurers 100 acres per man were offered, with 100 more for his wife, if he brought any, and 50 acres for every child under the age of sixteen, at a rent of 10 lbs. of wheat for every

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, c. vii. 187.

50 acres.<sup>1</sup> In our times an allotment of three acres with a cow is supposed to have powerful attractions for the agricultural community, and votes have been angled for with the tempting bait. It is clear from the above figures, that whatever might have been thought of the cow in the seventeenth century, the three acres would have been regarded as a ridiculously insignificant offer.

We have mentioned that by the Charter to Lord Baltimore, provision, wonderfully liberal for that age, was made for participation by the people in the government of the country. A scheme of Government so laid down, must necessarily have been to a considerable extent experimental, but it redounds to the credit of the proprietary of the colony that, on cause shown, Lord Baltimore evinced on many occasions, a willingness to place the Government on a more popular basis. There was a House of Assembly, a single Chamber, in which originally every free man of the province had a right to sit, either personally, or by deputy, as he chose. Later on, this single Chamber was divided into an Upper and a Lower House.

In his extreme anxiety for the preservation of religious peace, Lord Baltimore appears to have been exceedingly severe towards Catholics and others, who allowed their tempers to get the better of their judgments, and to use harsh or injurious expressions concerning their neighbours' religion. A very hard case was that of a certain Mr. William Lewis, a zealous, but apparently short-tempered Catholic, who allowed himself to be provoked by one of his servants

<sup>1</sup> Bozman, *History of Maryland*.

reading aloud in his house some choice extracts from a bigoted book, such as, "That the Pope was Anti-christ and the Jesuits were anti-Christian ministers." Lewis flew into a passion, and said that "it was a falsehood, and came from the devil, as all lies did, and he that writ it was an instrument of the devil, and he would prove it." Though the master's irritable temper appears to have been deliberately worked upon, he was tried, convicted and sentenced to pay a fine of 500 lbs. of tobacco, besides having to find security for 3,000 lbs. more to keep the peace for six months. Of the same anxiety on Lord Baltimore's part we may judge from the following provision in section 3 of the "Act concerning religion," passed in 1649:

Persons reproaching any other within the province by the name or denomination of heretick, schismatick, idolater, Puritan, Independent, Presbyterian, Popish priest, Jesuit, Jesuitic Papist, Lutheran, Calvinist, Anabaptist, Brownist, Antinomian, Barronist, Roundhead, Separatist, or any other name or term in a reproachful manner, relating to matters of religion, [shall] forfeit 10s. sterling for each offence; one half to the person reproached, the other half to his lordship, or in default of payment, to be publicly whipped and imprisoned without bail or mainprise until the offender shall satisfy the person reproached by asking him or her respectively forgiveness publicly for such offence, before the chief officer or magistrate of the town or place where the offence shall be given.<sup>1</sup>

A pleasing feature in Lord Baltimore's administration is the anxiety shown for the avoidance of hostilities with the Indians, into whose country the settlers had in some measure intruded. Wars with them could not indeed be entirely avoided, for his Government was

<sup>1</sup> Bozman, *History of Maryland*.

bound to protect the friendly Indians who had given the early settlers such a kindly reception, and who had thereby incurred the wrath of their more implacable comrades. Yet the history of Maryland does not appear to have been stained by any of those frightful massacres which occurred in Virginia and New England. Neither were Indians excluded from the exercise of the franchise. By a law passed in 1681 under Charles, third Lord Baltimore, every freeholder, white, negro, or Indian, possessing fifty acres of land—a small holding in Maryland—or personality to the value of £40, was entitled to exercise electoral rights. Curiously enough this franchise lasted in Maryland to the present century, when, in 1803, the poorest white acquired the franchise, and the negro and the Indian lost it. In Virginia, the negro, the mulatto, and the Indian were disfranchised in 1723. The feelings of Lord Baltimore towards the aborigines are best shown by his well-meant attempt to preserve them in their rights and liberties, and to allow them the opportunity of following their native habits, by making a reservation of ten thousand acres of land selected by themselves as best suited for the purpose. Of this experiment we shall only say, that if it failed, it did so in other hands than those of the Catholics of Maryland.

In considering the claim made by Catholics for the credit of initiating the first successful experiment which the world has witnessed, of combining, in a community radically divided in religious belief, the free exercise of civil rights with religious toleration, many Protestants may be ready to admit that facts undoubtedly bear out the claim—as they do the assertion that it was a Catholic who discovered



America, and another who invented the art of printing—yet they may feel convinced that the experiment must have been in the hands of Catholics not only much in advance of the age in which they lived, but also singularly independent of the influence of their clergy. To such it may be of special interest to inquire what provision was made by Lord Baltimore for the spiritual interests of the Catholic portion of his colonists, and in what section or order of the clergy it was possible for him to find men who would not only abstain from using their influence to thwart his enlightened aims, but would support and further them. Of all orders of the Catholic clergy the ordinary Protestant would find it difficult to suppose that Lord Baltimore would find such men in the ranks of the Jesuits, and yet it was precisely to them that he turned for assistance in his enterprise. The result justified his selection, for the relations which subsisted between them and the proprietary, as well as between them and the population of the colony, Catholic and Protestant alike—the Puritan subverters of the free constitution of Maryland excepted—were singularly happy, and prove that the confidence reposed in them was not misplaced.

In this short paper, only a brief reference is possible to the noble band of missionaries who kept alive the light of Catholic faith during the dark days which, as we shall see, were to come upon Maryland. Prominent among them was Father Andrew White, of whose name mention has already been made. He accompanied the first expedition in the *Ark and Dove*, and his labours on behalf of the flock committed to his care, and zeal in extending

the faith of Christ among the pagan Indian tribes of the country, have deservedly gained for him the title of "Apostle of Maryland." He was a typical English Jesuit of the period, full of zeal for the faith, and ready at all times to use his utmost efforts to extend it. Cool and undaunted in danger, and patient in suffering, neither prison nor exile, nor fear of death itself, could deter him from following out the holy vocation to which he had devoted his life and energies. Scarcely less distinguished was Father Philip Fisher, who shared with Father White the dangers of the Maryland Mission, and who along with him was seized in 1644 by the Puritan insurgents whose doings we have briefly to chronicle, and with him was sent to England in irons. Nothing daunted, the courageous missionary, after regaining his liberty, returned to Maryland, where his reappearance was welcomed as that of an "Angel of God," by the settlers and Indians, to both of whom the missionaries had endeared themselves by their labours and services.

Clayborne, Lord Baltimore's inveterate foe, did not by any means relax his hostile pursuit of his enemy's Government, on the failure of his first endeavour to seize the Isle of Kent. A more successful attempt was made by him in 1644 in combination with one Richard Ingle—"the pirate Ingle," as he is called by Catholic writers of the day. In the early part of that year the insurgents succeeded for a time in obtaining the mastery, and Leonard Calvert, the Governor, was forced to abandon the colony and take refuge in Virginia. For a year they retained the power which, through

the unpreparedness of the colonists, they had been able to seize, and it was not till near the end of 1646 that the Governor was able to collect a force sufficient to expel the rebels and recapture the district of St. Mary's. This success was afterwards followed by the submission of the county of Kent. Before being driven from the former stronghold, Ingle and his associates showed their malignant spirit by using their opportunity to destroy or embezzle the public records, and to purloin the Great Seal, thus throwing a cloud of obscurity over the history of the province, and introducing the utmost confusion and insecurity of possession of property in it. Fleeing from justice, Clayborne, Ingle, and their confederates made their way to England, where their accusations against the "Popish Government" of the province were only too favourably received by the Protestants and Presbyterians, who had now gained the upper hand. Leonard Calvert, who had so faithfully assisted his brother in the administration of his province, died in 1647, shortly after its reconquest.

Relieved at last, to some extent, from fears of immediate disturbance, Lord Baltimore's Government struggled on during the next few years, endeavouring to promote the welfare of the colony in every way, encouraging useful legislation, and placing upon their statute-book additional provisions, such as we have already quoted, for safeguarding and extending the principle of civil and religious liberty, to which all along Lord Baltimore had shown himself so friendly. Prominent among the Acts passed by the colonial Government is the remarkable one enacted in the year 1649, by which evidence was given to the world

that no feeling of vindictiveness against the promoters and abettors of the recently quelled disturbances, however justly incurred, had been, or would be for the future, allowed to interfere with the principle of civil and religious liberty on which they had taken their stand. Again it was enacted, in conformity with that principle,

And whereas the forcing of the conscience in matters of religion hath frequently fallen out to be of dangerous consequence, in those commonwealths where it has been practised, and for the more quiet and peaceable government of this province, and the better to preserve mutual love and amity among the inhabitants, no person within this province professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall be any ways troubled, molested, or discountenanced, for his or her religion, or in the free exercise thereof.<sup>1</sup>

But a more serious trial was at hand for Lord Baltimore and the Catholic party from the operation of the very principle of civil and religious liberty, of which they were the authors and the consistent and steadfast defenders. In the New England States the adherents of the Church of England were not allowed a footing, nor was their worship tolerated. In Virginia the state of matters was reversed. There the Church of England was supreme, and as long as it was so, it would tolerate no worship but its own. To Maryland fled the New England Episcopalian, from the persecution of his New England Protestant brethren; to Maryland, and chiefly to the district of Providence—now Annapolis—fled the Virginian Puritan, to escape the pursuit of the equally intolerant Episcopalian. Both were welcomed in Lord Baltimore's territory, and each was free to worship

<sup>1</sup> Langford, 27.

God in his own way, assured of the protection of just laws, and of the free exercise of his religion. Pity it is that these same Puritans, the boasted advocates of civil and religious liberty, were destitute not only of the principles of which they so unjustifiably made a boast, but of the commonest feelings of gratitude towards the Government of the colony which had given them refuge in the day of their distress. So early as the year 1651, we find indications of their disaffection to the established Government of the country, in their refusal to send representatives to the House of Assembly. Numerous, bigoted, and overbearing, they scrupled to burden their tender consciences with the oath of fidelity to a "Popish" proprietary, into whose territory they had entered of their own free-will. Matters came to a crisis in 1652, and the years which intervened between that date and the death of Cromwell were years of anxiety, harassment, and distress to the Catholics of Maryland.

For a few years previous to 1652 the unsettled state of parties in England, and the uncertainty which prevailed there as to the changes which might result from the next turn of the political wheel, did not fail to produce a corresponding confusion in the settlements on the American side of the Atlantic. Lord Baltimore had indeed, with prudent foresight, given in his adhesion to the Parliamentary party, which was *de facto* the ruling power in the State, but his doing so neither secured his rights, nor gave stability to his Government. Maryland at this period was contended for by four different claimants, and appeared to be regarded as a waif and stray to be

secured by the strongest or least scrupulous adventurer. Lord Baltimore was doing his best to preserve his and his people's chartered rights, which legality, prescription, and lavish expenditure of his private fortune ought to have rendered inviolable. Charles II., angry with Lord Baltimore for his adhesion to Parliament, issued a commission in favour of Sir William Davenant. Virginia, from whose territory Maryland had been severed, watched with longing eyes for an opportunity of reannexing it. But the enmity of Clayborne was more dangerous to Lord Baltimore's rights than the impotent anger of Charles, or the jealousy of Virginia. Clayborne had been associated with Bennett, as one of two Commissioners appointed by the English Parliament to reduce to their allegiance the provinces bordering on the Chesapeake. Their commission could hardly have been intended to disturb the rights of a proprietary who had given in his adhesion to the party which granted it, but a vindictive and unscrupulous man like Clayborne was not likely to forego the opportunity which fortune had put within his reach, of punishing his enemy for the defeats inflicted on him in 1634 and in 1646.

Interpreting their commission as including Maryland, they entered the province, and having the forces of Parliament at their back, deprived Lord Baltimore's lieutenant, Governor Stone, of his commission, and changed the officers of the province, leaving him, however, in the end, in retention of the executive power along with a Council of three, till instructions should arrive from England. During this distracting state of matters occurred the fall of the Long Parliament, and as it was under its warrant that

Clayborne and Bennett had imposed their will upon his lieutenant, it appeared to Lord Baltimore reasonable that their authority should fall along with it. He was besides displeased at the want of firmness which he supposed his lieutenant to have shown, in yielding to Clayborne and Bennett's terms, and deemed the opportunity a favourable one for regaining his lost authority. In 1654, Lord Baltimore's friends in the province succeeded in reinstating his rights in their integrity, displaced the Commissioners appointed by Clayborne and Bennett, and declared the condition of the province under the arrangements made by the latter, to have been a state of rebellion. But Clayborne and his associate were too powerful to be foiled in this manner. They hastened back to Maryland, deprived Governor Stone of his commission, and entrusted the administration of the province to a board of ten Commissioners appointed by themselves. Thus by Lord Baltimore's rash attempt to regain his authority, was the last state of the colony rendered worse than the first.

After this event, it was not long till proof was furnished that, however zealous Puritans might be in fighting for religious liberty for themselves, they had not the slightest idea of granting that liberty to others. A new Assembly, composed exclusively of Protestants, was soon convened, and their sentiments towards the Catholic settlers were embodied in an "Act concerning Religion," which recites as follows :

It is hereby enacted and declared, that none who profess and exercise the Popish, (commonly called the

Roman Catholic) religion can be protected in this province, but to be restrained from the exercise thereof.<sup>1</sup>

Indignant at these proceedings, and relying on the support of the Catholic and other loyal settlers, Lord Baltimore commissioned Stone and his lieutenant, Josias Fendall, to reassert his rights by force of arms. They were not long in regaining possession of the capital of the province, in which lay the chief strength of the Catholics. After vainly summoning the leaders of the Puritan party to submit, they marched against the town of Providence, the enemy's head-quarters. There, however, their enterprise came to a disastrous end. Faced by the Puritans of Providence in front, and having on their flank an enemy's ship, they were completely defeated. Stone himself, and many distinguished councillors, officers, and soldiers, were taken prisoners. Stone had a narrow escape from immediate execution, and owed his life to a remembrance of the kindness he had shown in former years to some of the Puritan party, who on that account could not bring themselves to imbrue their hands in the blood of their benefactor. Others of the prisoners, however, were not so fortunate, and in alleged violation of a promise guaranteeing their lives, four of the prisoners, three of whom were Catholics, were, several days after the battle, put to death in cold blood. As a further consequence of this victory, the residences of the Jesuit Fathers at their two settlements in the country, were sacked and plundered the Fathers themselves narrowly escaped with their lives, and made their way at great peril into Virginia,

<sup>1</sup> Bacon, c. iv.



where they suffered much from want of the necessities of life, and privation of means of support. Stone was sent to prison, and remained in confinement till the death of Cromwell brought some relief to the suffering Catholics.

But though Cromwell sustained the Commissioners in their authority, and did not disapprove of their nefarious actions, the exigencies of his position rendered it unadvisable for him to abrogate Lord Baltimore's rights, or to cancel his Charter, and under the Lord Protector's powerful authority he was to a certain extent reinstated, and a kind of dual authority, in which he shared, was established in the province. It might be an interesting subject of inquiry to discover what were Cromwell's motives in thus partially favouring Lord Baltimore's claims. A solution may lie in the desire which he showed during the latter part of his life, to gain, or at least to divide, the favour of the aristocracy, but a simpler explanation may be found in the enormous mass of weighty business with which he had to deal, concerning European matters, compared with which those of the infant settlements of America were mere trifles.

On the restoration of the Stuart dynasty, a season of peace and prosperity dawned again upon Maryland. The authority of Lord Baltimore was easily and quickly re-established under the presidency of Philip Calvert, his brother, whom he appointed Governor in 1661. "Freedom of conscience," the principle of the colony, again prevailed, and once more, as in former times, Protestants were the gainers. Strangers, persecuted at home on account of their

religious beliefs, came to Maryland, not only from England, but from many other European lands, and all, on their settling in the colony, were admitted to full equality and free citizenship of the province. From time to time commotions arose, and the rights of the proprietary were challenged. Such attempts were on the whole easily overcome, and Lord Baltimore's merciful disposition, ever inclined to forgiveness, exacted but little in the way of punishment for past transgressions. "The happiness of Maryland was," says Bancroft, "enviable."

As compared with the immediately preceding period, the last fifteen years of Cecil Lord Baltimore's administration were peaceful and prosperous, and he died in 1675, after having striven consistently for forty-three years, to advance, in every possible way, the welfare of the colony which he had founded. The purity of his aims, and the uprightness of his character, have drawn from the historian of the United States the following noble tribute to his character :

'To foster industry, to promote union, to cherish religious peace, these were the honest purposes of Lord Baltimore during his long supremacy.<sup>1</sup>

And again :

Thus was the declining life of Cecilius Lord Baltimore, the father of Maryland, the tolerant legislator, the benevolent prince, blessed with the success which philanthropy deserves. The colony which he had planted in youth crowned his old age with its gratitude. Who among his peers could vie with him in honours? A firm supporter of prerogative, a friend to the Stuarts, he was touched with the sentiment of humanity—an earnest disciple of the Roman Church, of which he venerated the expositions of

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, c. xiv. 523.

truth as infallible, he, first among legislators, established an equality among sects. The commercial metropolis of Maryland commemorates his name, the memory of his wise philanthropy survives in American history. He died after a supremacy of more than forty years, leaving a reputation for temperate wisdom which the dissensions in his colony and the various revolutions of England could not tarnish.<sup>1</sup>

About fourteen years before his death, Lord Baltimore had entrusted the administration of the colony to Charles, his eldest son. On succeeding to the title, the third Lord Baltimore strove to follow the example set him by his father and grandfather, and did so under some of the same discouragements against which both had had to struggle. The Established Church of England was now strong at home, and victorious over Dissent, but its clergy, however much they might delight in persecuting Puritans, joined with them in cordial dislike to Catholics, and viewed with jealousy the existence of a State in which these were free to worship God after the manner of their forefathers. The minds of the English people were goaded to fury by lying tales of Popish plots, artfully fomented by unprincipled men, and the time was found well suited for denouncing the "pest-house of iniquity" on the other side of the Atlantic, in which Catholics were not only permitted to worship God in their own way, but to hold sway over Protestants. The English clergy demanded the establishment of their Church in the province, at the cost of the settlers, Catholics and Puritans alike. The attempt was for the time ward off by the firmness of the new Lord Baltimore. "The Roman Catholic," says Bancroft, "was inflexible

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, c. xiv. 525, 526.

in his regard for freedom of worship.”<sup>1</sup> But the influences brought to bear on the English Ministry were, in the end, too strong to be overcome, and, in 1681, an order was issued that none but Protestants should hold office under Government. With the advent of the Catholic King James, it might have been thought that the religious liberties of the colony would have been restored, and no doubt the new King was far from entertaining the desire that these should be withheld, but unhappily James was no friend to civil liberties, and he judged it expedient that Maryland should be reduced to the same state of subjection to the Crown, to which he had destined the other colonies. It was in vain that Lord Baltimore remonstrated, and pleaded for exemption from the fate to which his province was doomed. A writ for reduction of his patent had already been ordered, when the Great Revolution of 1688 broke out, and James was driven from the throne.

Though the experiment of civil and religious liberty may be said to have terminated with the exclusion of Catholics from office under Government, some years before the outbreak of the Revolution, that great event completed and perpetuated its overthrow. One crushing blow after another fell upon the Catholic adherents of Lord Baltimore, and statute after statute was passed, conferring privileges upon the English Church and enacting disabilities against the “Papists.” A State religion was established in Maryland, but the religion was that of the Church of England. The English Acts of Toleration were put in force, but toleration was only for Protestant

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, c. xiv. 528.

Dissent, and the seventeenth century closed in gloom for the Catholics of Maryland, whose fathers, a generation before, had established an asylum for freedom on its fruitful shores. Their churches were closed, their schools dispersed, their priests hunted like outlaws from hiding-place to hiding-place throughout the settlement. Nothing can exhibit the mournful condition into which the colony fell, better than the words of Bancroft, whose statements have been so frequently referred to in these pages; these also show, in the reference made to the relapse of the Calvert family into Protestantism, that penal laws are sometimes even more disastrous to the wealthy and high born than they are to the poor and lowly.

The Roman Catholics were left alone without an ally, exposed to English bigotry and colonial injustice. They alone were disfranchised on the soil, which, long before Locke pleaded for toleration or Penn for religious freedom, they had chosen, *not as their own asylum only*, but, with Catholic liberality, *as the asylum of every persecuted sect*. In the land which Catholics had opened to Protestants, the Catholic inhabitant was the sole victim to Anglican intolerance. Mass might not be said publicly. No Catholic Bishop or priest might utter his faith in a voice of persuasion. No Catholic might teach the young. If the wayward child of a Papist would but become an apostate, the law wrested for him from his parents a share of their property. The disfranchisement of the proprietary related to his creed, not to his family. Such were the methods adopted to "prevent the growth of Popery." Who shall say that the faith of the cultivated individual is firmer than the faith of the common people? Who shall say that the many are fickle, that the chief is firm? To recover the inheritance of authority, Benedict, the son of the proprietary, renounced the Catholic Church for that of England; the persecution never crushed the faith of the humble colonists.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bancroft, c. xix. 719.

In commending to Catholic readers the subject of civil and religious liberty, as introduced and practised in Maryland by devoted adherents of the Catholic Church, before anything but barren theory had been broached on the side of its opponents, we must not be understood as entering into the subject of religious toleration itself, or condemning any legitimate and temperate effort made by Catholic rulers to maintain the unity of faith, which had been the unbroken tradition of their States for centuries before the Reformation. That is a subject which must be treated by itself, as the conditions which existed in Europe in the sixteenth century are entirely different from those which prevailed in Maryland in the seventeenth century, and in most European States at the present day. It is sufficient for our present purpose to have shown the incorrectness of the idea so prevalent in this country, and so assiduously propagated, that Protestants led the way in establishing civil and religious liberty, and in conferring upon the citizens of a free community the right to the free exercise of their religion.

## Was St. Aidan an Anglican?

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BY THE REV. SYDNEY F. SMITH, S.J.

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DR. LIGHTFOOT, whose premature death we all so much deplore, had occasion to preach on several occasions in places memorable on account of their part in the early ecclesiastical history of Northumbria.

These sermons were published in 1891 (after the preacher's death), the little volume containing some additional sermons on certain post-Reformation occupants of the see of Durham, in pursuance of the ruling idea that continuity between the Catholic past and the Anglican present has never been interrupted.

With these more recent celebrities we are not concerned. But, as the sermons on the early Northumbrian saints and missionaries are considered by Anglicans, especially in the North, to afford a valuable support to the continuity theory, we shall do well to examine into the matter.

It was not from Imperial Rome, nor from Kent, the handmaid of Rome, that Northumbria was destined to receive her Christianity. A larger and freer spirit must be stamped on the English Church in her infancy, never to be obliterated in maturer age.<sup>1</sup>

In these words we have the key-note to the preacher's contention. The spirit of the modern English (that is, Anglican) Church is a spirit of freedom. It is this

<sup>1</sup> *Leaders of the Northern Church.* By the Right Rev. J. B. Lightfoot, D.D., late Bishop of Durham, p. 41.

which makes recognition of the Roman thralldom an impossibility to her, and it is her consolation to find that this self-same spirit, which she has so faithfully preserved, is congenital. She received it from the earliest of all her founders. For the founders in question were founders, not of the Northumbrian Church only, but of the entire English Church, one small corner in the south-east alone excepted. To Aidan, not to Augustine, must be attributed the conversion of every kingdom of the Heptarchy save that of Kent. "Augustine was the Apostle of Kent, but Aidan was the Apostle of England."<sup>1</sup> When we probe deeper and inquire into the cause of Aidan's success and Augustine's failure, we discover it in the power of "earnest, simple, self-denying lives, pleading with a force which no eloquence of words can command:"<sup>2</sup> the suggestion being that these qualities were deficient in the Roman missionaries led by St. Augustine. A tendency to disheartenment, want of courage to face persecution, imperfect realization of the difference between solid and superficial conversions, and other defects are imputed to the Roman, by contrast to the Celtic, missionaries. It would seem as if we were to understand that this better moral equipment, with the consequent success in the arduous labours of the apostolate, was the natural outcome of the alleged rejection by the Celtic missionaries of the Papal Supremacy; although the inference is hardly supported by the comparative results of Anglican and Catholic missionary effort in modern times. Such is the substance of Dr. Lightfoot's contention in the first four sermons of his little

<sup>1</sup> P. II.<sup>2</sup> P. 10.



volume, a contention which in the sermons themselves is rather asserted than proved, but which is supported by some slight attempts at proof in the appended notes.

A few words first to give in outline the history of the planting of the Christian faith in this country. St. Augustine was sent by Pope Gregory the Great, in 596, with a few companions, to convert the island of Great Britain. The missionaries seem to have set out with some very natural trepidation of heart on their journey to the distant land where the Roman arms could afford them no protection. On their arrival in France, the reports reaching them of the ferocity of the islanders daunted their courage still more, and it required all the authority and persuasiveness of the intrepid Pontiff, who would have readily shared their dangers in his own person, to nerve them to their enterprise. Success, however—an easy success in the first instance—was in store for them. Ethelbert, King of Kent, was gained over almost at once, and the example of the monarch whom they revered and trusted, was followed generally by his subjects, and the see of Canterbury was founded in what had hitherto been the royal city. For a time the obvious course was to consolidate the work commenced. But after an interval of seven years an opportunity offered of establishing another Christian centre in the neighbouring East Saxon kingdom. Mellitus was sent to London, and the foundations of the original Cathedral of St. Paul's were laid. Failure, however, overtook this new effort, twelve years later, when the Christian King Sabert died, and his three Pagan sons succeeded him. Mellitus

was bidden to depart, and the fate even of Kentish Christianity hung for a time in the balance when Ethelbert's death, occurring about the same time, transferred the sceptre to his pagan son Eadbald. The latter danger was fortunately averted by the conversion of Eadbald, but though the sons of Sabert were all slain in battle after a short reign, some forty years intervened before the East Saxons would give heed again to the voice of the preacher.

After St. Augustine had been twenty years in his grave, an opportunity at last offered of making the truth known to the Angles of the North. Ethelburga, a sister of Eadbald, was chosen as his bride by Edwin, the Northumbrian Sovereign of Deira—Edwin, the son of that very Ella whose name had caused St. Gregory to say in his quaint manner, as he gazed on the white-skinned Anglian boys in the Roman slave-market, that Alleluias (*Ella-luias*) should sound in the land of Deira, and that it should soon be rescued from the wrath of God (*de ira Dei*). Eadbald demanded for his sister Ethelburga full liberty to profess her faith, and Edwin nobly replied that she should have it, and that he himself would embrace that faith, if on examination he found it to bear the marks of truth. Here was a bright prospect for St. Paulinus, now sent with the Princess as her chaplain.

For a time he had to wait for his harvest. Edwin was dilatory about his promised examination. But at length he was convinced, received Baptism, and joined with Paulinus in an active apostolate among his people. The people seem to have listened with eager ears. Bede gives a glowing account of the

plentiful conversions, and mentions by way of illustration how at one time at Yevering, at the foot of the Cheviots, Paulinus was occupied for thirty-six consecutive days in an uninterrupted labour of first instructing, and then baptizing in the waters of the Glen, the crowds who flocked to him from all the villages and places round. This was in Bernicia, the northern division of Edwin's kingdom. In Deira, the southern division, a similar sight could be witnessed on the banks of the Swale near Catterick. Nor did Paulinus confine his labours to the provinces north of the Humber. His zeal looked beyond, and we find him presently in Lindsey, the modern Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, repeating the same happy successes. At Lincoln itself the Governor and his family were converted, and a church erected near the site of the modern Cathedral; and at Tiovulfingacestir, probably Southwell, the Trent emulated the Glen and the Swale, and lent its waters to a multitude of neophytes. To the impulse of Paulinus also we ought fairly to attribute the apostolate undertaken by Edwin in East Anglia. At the time this East Anglian effort was not crowned with solid success. Though many embraced the Faith in company with their King, Eorpwald, the latter was shortly afterwards martyred, and the province relapsed into heathenism. For a time only, however. It was permanently regained three years later, under Sigbert, the new King, who had been converted during a foreign exile. Shortly after his accession to the East Anglian throne, a Burgundian monk of the name of Felix crossed over into Kent and offered his services to Archbishop Honorius. Honorius sent him on to

Sigbert, by whom he was gratefully received. And thus he became the Apostle of East Anglia.

To return to the northern kingdom. When the work of evangelizing it had lasted six years, and was full of the happiest promise, a great disaster befell the land. Penda, King of Mercia, the central sovereignty of the island, in league with Cadwallon, King of North Wales—the first a pagan, the second worse than a pagan in his bitter antipathy to the Christianized Anglians—invaded the dominions of Edwin, and defeated him in a decisive battle at Hatfield, in south-eastern Yorkshire. Edwin himself was slain on the field, and then ensued a “very great slaughter in the Church and people of Northumbria.” The Welsh King, particularly, spared neither women nor children; he put them all to a cruel death amidst great torments, and for a length of time harried all their provinces, in the resolve to exterminate the entire Anglian race from the territory of Britain. St. Paulinus, apparently, saw no object in remaining where for the present little work could be done, and, moreover, deemed it his duty to escort the Kentish Princess, with whom he had been charged, back to her brother’s dominions. He left his companion, James the Deacon, to supply his place so far as was needful, and we may suppose, in the defect of any positive record, that his intention was to return to the work himself when the storm should have blown over. However, the see of Rochester falling vacant at the time of his arrival in the South, he was appointed by Honorius of Canterbury to fill it.

The storm in Northumbria lasted for a year—“a year hateful to all good men”—and then the air was

clear once more. St. Oswald overthrew Cadwallon in the famous Battle of Heavenfield, and recovered all his uncle Edwin's dominions. Having spent many years of exile among the Scots, and received Christian Baptism and instruction from the monks of Iona, it was natural he should send thither for pastors to whose care he could commit his people. The result was the sending of St. Aidan, followed presently by many others from the same source; and thus the evangelization of Northumbria was commenced anew by these Celtic monks. Aidan fixed his see at Lindisfarne, and thus caused Bernicia rather than Deira, of the two provinces of the kingdom, to be the centre of the new missionary operations. We have heard from Bishop Lightfoot, in this faithful to the account given by the Venerable Bede, what manner of man St. Aidan was, and how his gentle saintliness told with the people.

Churches were built in various places, crowds used to come with joy to hear the Word preached, possessions and territories were given by royal munificence for the erection of monasteries, English children were taught by Scottish teachers, and learned at the same time both more advanced studies and the observance of regular discipline.

No further interruption was destined to stay the course of Northumbrian Christianity. After a nine years' reign Oswald was, indeed, slain in battle, probably at Oswestry, by the same Penda who had slain his uncle Edwin. But, though Deira and Bernicia were divided again for a short time, each received a Christian ruler, and after a few years Oswy, the brother of Oswald, united them both under

his sceptre, and the succession was secured to his family. Aidan himself was spared for sixteen years to superintend the progress of his work, and after his death there were Finan and Colman and their successors to continue it.

Nor was it only in the Northumbrian provinces that the Celtic mission from Iona gathered its fruits. During the episcopate of Finan, Peada, son of Penda, sought Baptism at his hands and begged for some monks, who were given him to convert the Mid-Anglians. An attempt was also made to re-convert the East Saxons by Cedd, one of St. Aidan's disciples, and, after the death of Penda on the field of Winwæd, Diuma was sent to establish at Lichfield a bishopric of Mercia.

This was the extent of the Celtic labours. Under influences altogether independent of Columba, the West Saxon kingdom was evangelized. Birinus was sent over by Pope Honorius, with a commission to evangelize the Mid-Saxons. Landing, however, in Hampshire, he found the West Saxons in need of conversion, and felt that he would be fulfilling best the spirit of his charge by bestowing his first labours upon them. This was a few years before the arrival of St. Aidan in the North. The work of Birinus, very soon after its inauguration, had to pass through a crisis, but it came out safely, and, after the death of Birinus, was taken up and carried to completion by Agilbert, a Frankish Bishop, and other successors. The only English race still remaining Pagan was that of the South Saxons. The distinction of effecting their conversion was reserved for St. Wilfrid in 681, during one of his unjust exiles from Northumbria.

With the aid of this slight sketch, it is possible to estimate Dr. Lightfoot's contention that Aidan, not Augustine, was the Apostle of England. As Catholics, we have no motive for undervaluing the work done by the monks of Iona. They and the missionaries from the Continent are cherished with equal veneration by ourselves now as they ever were by our Catholic ancestors. We regard them all equally as our fathers in the faith, and they while living regarded one another as ministers of the same faith and fellow-labourers in the same good cause.

Aidan (says Bede) was deservedly loved by all, even by those who thought differently about the Pasch; and not only by persons of ordinary station, for he was held in like reverence by the Bishops themselves, Honorius of Canterbury and Felix of the East Anglians.<sup>1</sup>

When, however, we are required in favour of St. Aidan to dispossess St. Augustine of his traditional title of Apostle of England, accorded to him by all previous generations, we may well ask on what grounds.

Former ages have been unhesitating in awarding the title to St. Augustine and to him only. In the Council of Clovesho, for instance, in 747, it was decreed:

That the birthday of the blessed Pope Gregory, as also the day of death, falling on May 26th, of St. Augustine, Archbishop and Confessor, who, sent by the aforesaid Pope, our Father St. Gregory, brought to the English race the knowledge of faith, the Sacrament of Baptism, and the knowledge of the heavenly country, be honoured and venerated by all as is becoming.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Eccles. Hist.* iii. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Haddan and Stubbs, *Councils*, p. 368.

Surely they were better able to know than modern Anglicans can know now, what was the comparative impression made upon the country by the different workers and classes of workers, who, not further back than a century and a half, had founded their Church? And they tell us out of this their fuller knowledge, that the original and the dominating impulse in the evangelization of the country was St. Augustine's not St. Aidan's. Now this is just what is ordinarily meant by apostleship. The title belongs to the labourer who lays the foundations, and it is not necessary that he should have personally carried the building founded to its completion, or that he should have extended the borders of the Church to every province of the nation.

What St. Augustine did was to found the Church in the kingdom of Kent, and thereby establish a basis for Christian rule and influence in the land. We can well understand why he did not do more. His episcopate lasted but six years, he had necessarily but a very few colleagues of his own, and the Britons to whom he applied for aid refused it in their un-Christian hatred of their Teutonic enemies. In spite of this dearth of helpers, he made an attempt to found two other bishoprics—one at Rochester, the other at London—and it was not his fault if the accession of the heathen princes expelled Mellitus from London before the newly-sown faith of the East Saxons had had time to mature.

To St. Augustine's impulse we must also attribute the grand work of St. Paulinus in the North, although it did not commence till twenty years after the Saint's death. We must call it a grand work, for so it was.



Already we have heard Bede's account of what was done ; but because a terrible persecution overtook it in its infancy and interrupted its course, we are asked by Dr. Lightfoot to regard the labours of Paulinus as a mere exhibition of "feverish activity." Paulinus, it is alleged, had not the prudence to think of consolidating his work : his only anxiety was to multiply converts. Consequently, when the trial came, "it was as if a sponge had passed over the land." How amusingly unconscious Anglicans are of the inconsistencies into which their position leads them ! Augustine can spare no monks for external work, and seeks to consolidate that already begun. In consequence, he is blamed for his want of zeal. Paulinus is beset by vast multitudes seeking admission into the fold. He spends himself day and night in giving such preliminary instruction as was possible under the circumstances, and then administers Baptism. In consequence, he is accused of feverish activity. What sort of historical justice is this ? Paulinus could not do much towards consolidating his work, because he had neither the means nor the time. He did what he could : he made a beginning ; and doubtless would have proceeded to mature what was in its infancy had his destiny allowed him. It is true he left when Cadwallon was devastating the land, and Dr. Lightfoot considers this to evince faint-heartedness. No doubt it would have been magnificent to stay and court martyrdom. But would the useless sacrifice of life have been more according to the dictates of Christian prudence than a temporary withdrawal, the more so as he did leave another to sustain the neophytes in their trial, one who perhaps was the

better fitted for that office, just because he was the less known?

And by what authority does Dr. Lightfoot tell us that the work of Paulinus was altogether blotted out? Bede is the only informant that we have, and he certainly does not say so much. At most it is Dr. Lightfoot's inference from Bede's story, and, we submit, it is a false inference. There was only a year's interval between the departure of Paulinus and the coming of Aidan. Bede himself tells us that St. Hilda had been christened by Paulinus, and he has preserved to us a touching account, told in his own hearing by one old man, of the veneration felt for Paulinus when he baptized in the Trent. It is reasonable to think that, although St. Aidan of course added many besides to the Church, a large number, the nucleus in fact, of the flock which gathered round him on his arrival was formed out of those whom Paulinus had converted and baptized. They were won back rather than won, and many of them not so much won back as preserved to the faith which they had not abandoned at heart during the persecution. There was continuity, in other words, between the work of Aidan and that of Paulinus: and so Paulinus more than Aidan, and, behind Paulinus, Augustine, was the Apostle of the North.

Such is Augustine's claim to the title of Apostle. What about Aidan's? Aidan and his monks did undoubtedly a grand work. The faith of the neophytes was no longer in their days subjected to the trial of royal persecutions, and this made the labours of the missionary easier. We must note this difference between the circumstances under which the Celtic

and the Roman missionaries respectively laboured, because it ought to enter into the comparison which Anglicans have challenged in the view of disparaging the Romans. The difference is in itself, however, matter only for thanksgiving, by no means for disparagement of the labours of the Celts. As regards the extent of their part in the conversion of the country, we may call Aidan co-apostle, with Paulinus, of the North; and we may call his disciple Cedd an apostle of the East Saxons, and his other disciple Chad the apostle of Mercia. We may also award Aidan his share in the conversion of the South Saxons, whose immediate apostle was his still more famous disciple St. Wilfrid: although Dr. Lightfoot must have experienced a difficulty in comprising Wilfrid's works in the category of successes attributable to the freer spirit of the Celtic missionaries.

But it is time to pass to the more essential question, whether there was any such difference in faith between Aidan and Augustine as Anglicans have lately taken to maintain?

The story of the efforts made by St. Augustine to establish relations with the British clergy, is familiar to us all. There was a meeting under an oak-tree, somewhere near Cirencester, between the two parties, which came to nought because they could not arrange the terms. St. Augustine seems to have been aware that there was some difference of practice between the Britons and the rest of Christendom, the result of their great isolation from the centre of ecclesiastical life and teaching, and he had considered with himself how much of this dissentient practice he could conscientiously tolerate. He required of the Britons

only that they should celebrate their Pasch at the same time as the rest of the world, that they should observe the rites of the Roman Church in the administration of Baptism, and that they should co-operate in converting the Anglians. Of these points the last was a matter of obligation under the precept of Christian charity, and the second must always remain obscure to us through the lack of further data. As regards the first we have full information. The Britons differed from the rest of the world in their assignment of Easter in two respects: first, in following a computation of Paschal cycles which, though formerly in use at Rome, had on account of its defects been superseded by one more accurate; secondly, in keeping the feast on the fourteenth day itself of the Paschal moon when that day happened to be a Sunday, instead of transferring it to the twenty-first, the Sunday following.

After some negotiations the Britons rejected the overtures of St. Augustine, and the question arises, what were the real motives of the rejection? Anglicans, not deeming the points mentioned to involve any important principle, have concluded that the real issue lay behind, and was that of the Papal claims. So, for instance, Dr. Bright, who censures Lingard as follows:

Lingard argues that the subjects of Papal authority and British independence did not come into consideration.<sup>1</sup> This is futile. The British delegates could not fail to know that Augustine did come to them as specially empowered from Rome. And their reverence for Rome did not, in

<sup>1</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Church*, i. 380.

their view, commit them to obedience to its emissary. But it *must* have done so, had it included a belief in Papal Supremacy.<sup>1</sup>

If, however, these subjects had come into consideration, Bede must have known it from his authorities. The dialogue, too, would have taken a different form altogether. There was no motive on either side for concealing the true issue, if it was that alleged. Dr. Bright's mistake is to assume that conduct is always strictly logical. If it were so, the inference from resistance and disobedience to rejection of authority would be sound. As it is not, the inference is unsound.

What then were the real motives by which the Britons were actuated? That St. Augustine's pride in not rising to receive their envoys counted for very much is not conceivable. Judging from the circumstances, we may set down dislike of the Saxons, their race-foes, as the main ground of the British refusal. Still, probably each of St. Augustine's demands was repulsive to the Britons. Religious rites and usages, although only involving discipline, may through long custom become intensely precious. This very matter of Easter computation supplies us with an apt illustration from our own experience. When the suggestion is made that, in the interests of practical convenience, Easter should be a fixed instead of a moveable feast, it is always urged that no principle can possibly be involved in the proposal. Yet what Catholic does not instinctively feel that the change would cut him to the quick, and that if, what is of course inconceivable, the Pope could be got at by

<sup>1</sup> *Early English Church History*, p. 83.

the advocates of change and should prescribe according to their wishes, it would require of us an almost heroic exercise of obedience to submit?

We are to conclude, then, that no evidence of difference of creed between St. Augustine and the Britons can be inferred from the occurrences at Augustine's oak. And this is to the point, although we are immediately concerned with the faith of Aidan and the Northern Celts, not of the Celts in Wales. It is to the point, because the faith of all the Celts was confessedly the same, and one argument advanced by Anglicans for the alleged "independence" of Aidan is the alleged "independence" of the Britons. It is to the point again, because we have in the Easter controversy between the supporters of Colman, Aidan's successor, and those of Wilfrid, which came to a head at the conference of Whitby, sixty years later, a mere reproduction of the previous dispute at the oak. In Aidan's time, we are told by Bede, his error in celebrating the Pasch was tolerated. He was so respected and venerated by all, that those who knew better did not like to trouble him about an observance which he would have found it so hard to surrender. But after his death the inconvenience arising out of the clash between the two observances grew more acute and caused the scandal of differing from the Universal Church in so sacred a matter to be more fully realized.

The crisis was reached one year, when King Oswy, following the Celtic computation, began his Easter festivities whilst his Kentish Queen was just addressing her mind to the mournful ceremonies of Holy Week. Then the conference of Whitby was

held. The Celtic representatives were Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, with his clerics from Scotland, Bishop Cedd, who had preached to the East Saxons, and Abbess Hilda of Whitby. On the other side were Agilbert, Bishop of the West Saxons, Wilfrid, James the Roman deacon left behind by Paulinus, and Tuda, a Celt from Southern Ireland. Also there were present Kings Oswy and Alchfrid, the former inclining to the Celtic, the latter to the Roman usage. Colman expounded the argument for his own side, relying on the authority of St. Columba and the supposed authority of St. John. Wilfrid replied, with some unnecessary heat of words, but with an excellent exposition of the motives demanding compliance with the Catholic custom, drawn partly from the reasons by which the Universal Church had been moved to adopt her method, partly from the general duty of obedience. Dealing with the authority of St. Columba pleaded by his opponents, he attributed that Saint's error to the absence of more accurate information in his distant dwelling-place, and expressed confidence that he would have abandoned it had the information arrived in his days. That thus he had suffered no harm from his error, which however would not be the case with the present generation of his sons, who would certainly sin if they contemned the decrees of the Apostolic See and the Universal Church. For were St. Columba and his monks of higher authority than the blessed Prince of the Apostles, to whom the Lord said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven"?

This appeal brought up King Oswy, who asked of Colman if such words were truly said by our Lord to St. Peter. On receiving the acknowledgment that they were, he rejoined, "This then is the door-keeper whom I will not resist, but as far as my knowledge and power goes, I will obey all his decrees, lest perchance when I approach the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven, there be none to open, he turning his back to me to whom the keys are proved to have been given."

The words of the Gospel brought home forcibly to the mind of the King the necessity of obedience to him whom God had placed over His Church, blessed Peter, ever living in the line of his successors. The effect on Cedd was the same. So was the effect on Eata and many of the monks of Colman's own Abbey of Lindisfarne: so probably was it on Hilda of Whitby, since she continued at her post under the rectified observance: so certainly it was on many others, as we learn from Bede, who says, "All present agreed with the King, the leaders from their seats, the commoner sort from the place where they stood."

Colman, with a few others, alone continued to resist the change. They returned to Scotland, "in order to treat with their own people there what should be done." The phrase here used is noticeable. We may fairly gather from it that even Colman was not altogether sure of a point concerning which so many of his previous adherents had been convinced by the discussion held. He wanted light, and went to seek it of those in whom he had confidence. That he ever passed over himself to the Catholic observance does not appear, but the Celtic Christians had all



accepted it within the space of half a century from 664, the date of the Council of Whitby. Those in South Ireland had even accepted it thirty years earlier, according to Bede, "in deference to the admonitions of the Bishop of the Apostolic See." The Northern Irish accepted it in 704, convinced by the reasoning of Adamnan, the then Abbot of St. Columba's own monastery at Iona. Adamnan was less successful with his own people, but these too were gained over twelve years later by the Anglian Egbert. In Wales, nourished probably by the intense animosity felt by its inhabitants for their English neighbours, the erroneous system held out longer. It was not completely extinguished till the commencement of the ninth century. But, as a set off against this, we find the Welsh consistently regarded by English writers as in schism on account of their attitude towards the rest of the Christian world.

From these facts we are able to see how little there is in common between the position taken up by modern Anglicans and that of these ancient Celtic Christians. The Anglican position is one of protest based on a conscious theory that the "Bishop of Rome hath no authority in this realm of England," the authority which he claims belonging of right only to the English Crown. The attitude of the Celtic monks was not based on any theoretical differences in regard to the ultimate seat of authority between themselves and the rest of the Christian world. It was merely an attitude of practical protest against a particular measure, and based on the very strong feeling that the usage to which they had been so long accustomed, and into which they had, so to speak,

grown, ought not to be abandoned. We may call this, as we have called it higher up, disobedience : refusal to obey a recognized authority as distinguished from refusal to recognize the authority commanding : refusal, too, to obey, not of the baser sort, but refusal arising out of the mistaken persuasion that the particular order issued was in violation of a most sacred obligation.

Let it however be granted, for the sake of argument, that the Anglican thesis is completely proved : that Welsh and Irish and Scottish<sup>1</sup> were in their origins quite as Anglicans are now. What then? Are they brought by this a whit nearer the establishment of their pet theory, that in the days of Henry and Elizabeth no breach took place in the continuity which they claim to hold with the Church of the Dunstons and the Anselms, the Cuthberts and the De Burys? If we are to say that the Celtic Church of Northumbria did differ, on the point of Roman Supremacy, from the rest of the world, we must say also that it was of short survival. It gave way at once before the influx of what was deemed to be fuller light at Whitby. It retired to a remote island off the coast of Mayo, there also soon to lose all traces of its peculiar usages. Meanwhile in Northumbria all classes hastened to harmonize their beliefs and practices with those of their southern and continental brethren : and it is from them, not from the Celts—that is, supposing the two to have represented essentially different creeds—that the later English Church, the Church of the Anglo-Saxon and mediæval periods, derives its origin.

<sup>1</sup> These terms are used, here and throughout, for convenience' sake, as they are understood nowadays.

## The Gordon Riots.<sup>1</sup>

BY LIONEL JOHNSON, B.A.

MOST Catholics know by name the Gordon Riots; those of us who are readers of Dickens know something of their history from the brilliant pages of *Barnaby Rudge*; but I think that few of us recognize in these riots the last great persecution of the Catholic Church in England. They originated in the first great abolition of the penal laws; and from that day to this English Catholics have more and more won back their personal and civic rights, together with the respect and toleration of their fellow-citizens. From time to time, as at the restoration of the Hierarchy in England forty-three years ago, Protestant malice has displayed itself in bursts of noisy rhetoric; but the Gordon Riots are the last instance of a great popular agitation against the Catholic Church, culminating in outrage and desecration. And because this is so, I have tried to put together an account of the Gordon Riots, compiled for the most part from contemporary records.

Catholics can easily admire the splendid virtues of faith and steadfastness displayed by the Blessed Thomas More, Lord Chancellor, by the Blessed John Fisher, Cardinal and Bishop, and by their fellow-sufferers at the Reformation: martyrdom compels our admiration. But we easily forget the quiet courage of our Catholic forefathers up to the present

<sup>1</sup> A Lecture given at St. George's Students' Union, Southwark.

century ; they were not persecuted unto death, but they lived daily under the shadow of death ; their lives were made a burden and a torment, yet they endured that daily, lifelong infliction of miseries, great and small, which is almost harder to bear than the sudden agony of martyrdom and death. It will be enough if I do but give a rough list of some of the penal laws in force against Catholics, from the times of the Reformation, up to the outbreak of the Gordon Riots.

(1) No Catholic nobleman might sit in the House of Lords. (2) No Catholic gentleman might sit in the House of Commons. (3) No Catholic might vote at elections. (4) A Catholic had to pay double taxes, unless he turned Protestant. (5) No Catholic might hold any public office. (6) No Catholic might present to any living in the Established Church, though Jews were allowed to do so. (7) Catholics who stayed away from Protestant worship were fined £20 a month. (8) No Catholic might keep arms for self-defence, nor bring a lawsuit, nor be a guardian, nor an executor, nor a lawyer, nor a doctor, nor travel five miles from his house : all under heavy penalties. (9) A Catholic woman, married to a Protestant, forfeited two-thirds of her dowry, unless she attended her husband's church, and she was liable to imprisonment at any time, unless ransomed by her husband at £10 a month. (10) Any four magistrates might compel a Catholic convicted of not attending Protestant worship to turn Protestant, on penalty of banishment out of England for life. If he dared to return, he was to be hanged. (11) Any two magistrates might at any time summon any Catholic over sixteen ; should he refuse to turn Protestant, and persist for six months in his refusal, he was declared incapable

of possessing land, and his lands were confiscated to the nearest Protestant heir. (12) No such Catholic might buy land, and all contracts made by him were null and void. (13) Any Catholic who employed a Catholic schoolmaster in his family, was fined £10 a month, besides £2 a day on account of the schoolmaster. (14) Any Catholic who sent his child to a Catholic school abroad, was fined £100, and the child was disqualified from inheriting, from buying, and from holding any property whatsoever. (15) Any priest who was convicted of saying Mass was fined £120; any one convicted of hearing Mass was fined £60. (16) Any priest who came from abroad and did not turn Protestant within three days, was liable to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. (17) Any one who became a Catholic, or induced another to become a Catholic, was liable to be hanged, drawn, and quartered.

Under these mild and pleasant laws lived the Catholics of England in the last century; the Catholics of Ireland suffered far worse things, a penalty for her greater fidelity to the Catholic faith. It is true that these barbarous laws were not always enforced; public opinion, common charity, could not stand the infliction of death; but the lesser penalties were constantly inflicted, and every Catholic lived with these swords over his head, in a state of perpetual apprehension. The worst danger came from informers; those of us who have the good fortune, and also the misfortune, to be Irish, know what that implies. In many cases a distant Protestant relative, holding no intercourse with his Catholic kinsmen, was tempted to possess himself of their estates by giving information of some breach of these monstrous laws, and the magistrates were bound, however unwillingly, to act.

It was because some of these laws, by no means the greater number or the most severe, were done away, that the Gordon Riots broke out, and that London was nearly burnt to the ground to the tune of "No Popery" and "Down with the Papists." So much by way of preface.

Upon the 1st of May, 1778, the English Catholics, in view of the proposed Bill for their relief, presented a petition to King George III. "We beg leave," they said, "to assure your Majesty that we hold no opinions repugnant to the duties of good citizens." It was perfectly true, the English Catholics were a small and peaceable body ; as Burke said, they were "enough to torment, but not to fear ;" and he estimates their numbers, of all ages and conditions, at less than 50,000. A few days after the presentation of the petition two leading members of the House of Commons, Sir George Savile and Mr. Dunning, introduced a Bill for the relief of Catholics. It was a very harmless Bill in the eyes of all intelligent Protestants ; priests were no longer to be punished for officiating or for teaching : the estates of Catholics educated abroad were no longer liable to confiscation by the nearest Protestant heir ; no Protestant might any more seize upon his Catholic kinsman's estate ; Catholics might in future inherit property of all kinds. These were very elementary privileges, and Mr. Dunning called the refusal of them so long, "a disgrace to human nature." Sir George Savile said that he knew of Catholics constantly blackmailed by informers. The Bill was passed, almost unanimously, in both Houses ; all the leading politicians spoke in its favour, including Thurlow, afterwards Lord Chancellor, and Henry Dundas, Lord Advocate for

Scotland. The only speaker against the Bill was the Bishop of Peterborough, who professed Liberal principles, but forgot them where Catholics were concerned.

The Bill did not apply to Scotland, since it repealed clauses of a statute passed in William III.'s time, before the legislative union of England and Scotland; but Dundas promised to introduce a Bill repealing some of the penal laws against Scotch Catholics. Everything looked calm, but towards the end of the year an uproar arose in Scotland. The Presbyterian Synod in Glasgow resolved to oppose any Bill that might be introduced for the relief of Catholics: at Edinburgh, and elsewhere, special Protestant associations were formed. Newspapers and sermons were full of Protestant denunciations, Catholics were insulted in the streets, and threatened at home. Dr. Robertson, the distinguished historian, was specially abused for his toleration of Catholics. At last the Protestant associations found a worthy leader in the notorious Lord George Gordon. This fanatic was the youngest son of the Duke of Gordon, and born in 1750; he was therefore only twenty-eight years of age; George II. was his godfather. He began his career as a midshipman in the navy at the time of the American Revolution, but he quarrelled with the authorities about his promotion, and left the service. He was elected member for a small Wiltshire town in 1774; at first he was silent, but soon became known for the vehemence of his No Popery harangues. It was a witticism of the day that there were three parties in the State, the Ministry, the Opposition, and Lord George Gordon. Horace Walpole called him "the lunatic apostle;"

and he also speaks of his "loose morals," whilst Hannah More, a very different sort of person, calls him "very debauched." He was very tall, very thin, very sallow, with very high cheekbones and very long, lank, red hair; he wore spectacles, trousers of red tartan plaid, and a black velvet coat. His speeches were simply ravings, for example: "If His Majesty does not keep his coronation oath, we will do more than abridge his revenues, we will cut off his head." It was his firm belief that George III., of all men, was a Catholic. In the House of Commons no notice was taken of him, but he created immense enthusiasm throughout the country, and most of all in Scotland, where next year, in 1779, riots broke out. The houses and property of Catholics were destroyed, and their persons insulted and assaulted. At Edinburgh handbills were distributed crying out against "the Pillar of Popery;" that is to say, a house newly built at Leith, with a room in it used for Mass. It was burned to the ground, the inhabitants escaping with difficulty. The magistrates did nothing.

Jack Wilkes, the celebrated demagogue, infidel, rake, and wit, who throughout the riots behaved admirably, asked Dundas what had become of his Bill for the relief of Scotch Catholics? Dundas replied, that the Scotch Catholics had asked him to drop it, for fear of the Protestant uproar, which it would excite. They forwarded a petition to Parliament praying for redress: Burke presented it: Lord North, the Prime Minister, was fast asleep as usual, while Burke spoke, blaming the Government for its indolence. "Behold," said he, "what I have said again and again; the Government, if not defunct,



at least slumbers: brother Lazarus is not dead, only sleepeth." The Protestant associations grew in confidence, and Lord George formed similar associations in England, with branches all over the country. He continued to rant about his tens of thousands of followers and I think it clear that, weak and foolish by nature, the sense of power turned his brain. We have come to the great year of the riots, 1780. Gordon's first step was to procure an interview with George III., whom he believed to be a Catholic, and upon that unlucky monarch he inflicted a long Irish Protestant pamphlet about the errors of Popery. He began to read it at mid-day: he had not finished it by sunset; so Walpole tells the story. It had no effect upon the King; at least, none of a political nature. The Government began to be alarmed at the violence of popular feeling against the Catholics; and, to soothe them, a Bill for the relief of Protestant Dissenters had been passed: a similar policy to the Declaration of Indulgence by James II. It was of no use. Lord George delivered inflammatory speeches every day, and was busily engaged in getting signatures to a monster petition to Parliament against the Catholics. Advertisements were put up all over London, and handbills littered about the streets. The petition, in the course of many weeks, was signed by thousands. At the end of May, Lord George held a meeting of the Protestant Association in the Coachmakers' Hall. The great room was crowded.

Lord George promised to present the petition on June 2nd. It was resolved, that the Association should meet on that day in St. George's Fields, Southwark, wearing blue cockades in their hats, as an outward and visible sign of true Protestants.

Lord George declared that unless 20,000 men at least assembled, he would not present the petition. On Friday, June 2nd, at ten o'clock, they met in St. George's Fields, which were then an entirely open space, including the site of the St. George's Catholic Club, and of the head-quarters of the Catholic Truth Society. The lowest estimate of their numbers gives them as 50,000 ; the highest, as 100,000. A newspaper of the day, the *London Courant*, remarked that it was "a glorious and most affecting spectacle, to see such numbers of our fellow-citizens advancing in the cause of Protestantism, so meanly and infamously deserted." A few days later, the same newspaper did not think it half so glorious and affecting a spectacle, when these true blue Protestants had nearly burned London to the ground, for the honour and glory of Protestantism. Crowds joined the ranks of the Association for mere fun or mischief's sake. Gordon was received with enthusiasm, and made a silly speech. The mob was divided into three divisions, which crossed the river by three bridges to meet at the Houses of Parliament, a distance, as the Obelisk in the Blackfriars Road informs us, of one mile. The main body crossed over London Bridge, and proceeded through Temple Bar to Westminster, six abreast. The great petition, with 120,000 signatures to it, mostly marks, was carried before them by a porter. The Government had taken no precautions: there were, of course, at that time no police, but only a few old and feeble watchmen. No special constables were sworn in, no troops were in readiness, as they were in 1848, when the great Chartist assembly was held, nearly upon the same spot. The mob advanced to Palace Yard

and took possession of the open space, before the Houses met in the afternoon. The House of Lords met to consider a motion by the Duke of Richmond, for annual Parliaments and universal franchise; a singularly inappropriate time at which to move such measures. Thurlow, now Lord Chancellor, was ill; and Lord Mansfield, the great Judge, took his place.

Lord Mansfield was at this time most unpopular, because he had lately directed a jury to acquit a Catholic priest accused of the monstrous crime of saying Mass. His carriage drew up to the yard, the windows were immediately broken, and the old man and great lawyer was howled at as a "notorious Papist," his robes torn, his wig dishevelled; the Archbishop of York, who had previously succeeded in entering the House, after his lawn sleeves had been torn off and thrown in his face, rushed single-handed into the mob and rescued Lord Mansfield. The Judge took his seat upon the woolsack, "trembling," we are told, "like an aspen." The Bishop of Lincoln, the Lord Chancellor's brother, had his carriage smashed to pieces: half fainting, he fled into a neighbouring house and escaped over the roof in a woman's dress. Lord Bathurst, President of the Council, had his wig pulled off, and was jeered at by the mob as "the Pope," and "an old woman:" the mob thus splitting in two, as Walpole wittily remarked, the Protestant notion of Pope Joan. The Duke of Northumberland had with him in his carriage his secretary, a gentleman in black: the mob raised the cry of "Jesuit." The Duke was dragged out, rolled on the ground, and robbed, on the best Protestant principles, of his watch and purse. Meanwhile, inside the House of Lords,

prayers were read, and business began; when, as the Duke of Richmond was speaking, Lord Montfort burst into the House, and in a breathless voice begged to inform their lordships, that Lord Boston was being killed by the mob. It was suggested that the Lords should sally forth in a body to his rescue, the Lord Chancellor at their head with the mace; but the Chancellor objected. A contemporary account says: "At this instant it is hardly possible to conceive a more grotesque appearance than the House of Lords presented. Some of their lordships with their hair about their shoulders, others smutted with dirt, most of them as pale as the ghost in *Hamlet*, and all of them standing up in their places and speaking all at once." Some proposed to send for the Guards, the Justices, or the magistrates: outside, the mob was yelling and shouting. This lasted half an hour; then Lord Boston staggered in, half dead, his clothes in rags. The mob had taken him for a Catholic, and threatened to cut the sign of the Cross upon his forehead. He escaped by cleverly contriving to engage the ringleaders in a violent controversy among themselves, whether or no the Pope was Antichrist: in the heat of it he got away. The Lords summoned the Middlesex magistrates before them: they said they had no orders, and that they had only been able to collect eight constables. At eight o'clock the House adjourned, and the Peers slunk home in the dark.

In the House of Commons things had been far worse; the mob burst into the lobbies of the House itself, shouting, "No Popery." Lord George, seconded by a certain Alderman Bull, presented the great petition, and moved that it should be at once

considered in committee. Others moved to consider it on Tuesday, the 6th. But the question was undecided, because the division lobbies were held by the mob, and votes could not legally be taken without a division. Lord George from time to time, harangued his followers, inflaming them: "There is Mr. Burke," said he, "the member for Bristol, speaking against you;" and "Do you know that Lord North calls you a mob?" The mob increased in fury and kicked at the doors. Lord North sent privately for a detachment of the Guards. Colonel Holroyd told Lord George he once thought him a fool, he now knew him a knave; and if he said another word to the mob, he should move for his committal for Newgate. Colonel Murray, Gordon's cousin, said: "My Lord George, do you really mean to bring your rascally adherents into the House of Commons? If you do, the first man that enters, I will plunge my sword, not into his body, but into yours." Gordon was daunted, and retired to the dining-room, where he fell asleep, listening to the moral exhortations of the chaplain. In Gordon's absence the mob in the lobbies grew quiet; outside, gentlemen tried to allay the uproar by conciliatory speeches from the balconies of the neighbouring houses. In this way time was gained for the arrival at nine o'clock of Mr. Addington, a magistrate, with a party of Horse Guards. He told the people that he meant them no harm; if they would disperse, so would the soldiers. At this hundreds of the mob went away, giving three cheers for Mr. Addington. A party of Foot Guards meanwhile cleared the lobbies, and the House was able to divide. Eight votes were given for Gordon's proposal to consider

the petition at once, 194 against it; and the House adjourned till Tuesday. The magistrates and soldiers went home, thinking that all was over. Both Lords and Commons bore their insults, says Dr. Johnson, with great tameness.

But large parties of the rioters that night attacked the Sardinian Catholic Chapel at Lincoln's Inn Fields and the Bavarian Chapel in Warwick Street, two of the very few licenced Catholic chapels belonging to foreign ambassadors. These they burned to the ground. Fire-engines were sent for, but the mob prevented them from being used. The furniture of the Sardinian Chapel was burnt on a public bonfire in the streets. When it was nearly over a party of soldiers arrived and captured thirteen men. Next morning, Saturday, the town was apparently quiet: the House of Lords met and passed Lord Bathurst's motion to prosecute the authors and abettors of the riots. The same evening there was a little rioting in Moorfields; then, as now, a very Catholic quarter. But on the following Sunday afternoon, serious rioting took place there; yet Kennett, the Lord Mayor, locked himself up in the Mansion House, and did nothing. All the Catholic chapels and houses in the district were burnt; the altars, tabernacles, vestments, and so forth, being thrown upon a great bonfire. On Monday afternoon the Privy Council met, and offered a reward for the discovery of the rioters at the Sardinian Chapel, but still took no more energetic steps. The seriousness of the riots was entirely under-estimated.

The riots increased, and the cockades were seen on all sides; the chapels in Wapping and Smithfield were burnt, and the houses of those who had dared

to give evidence against the rioters were plundered. The chief object of attack was the house of Sir George Savile, the mover of the Catholic Relief Bill, in Leicester Fields, now Leicester Square ; it was carried by storm, and plundered. The furniture of the chapels was burned in triumph before Lord George's house in Welbeck Street. That dangerous lunatic began to be afraid of his work and of his followers, and he issued a notice disavowing the riots, in the name of the Association. Burke, the great statesman, who favoured Catholic Relief, had to take refuge in the house of General Burgoyne, and he speaks with the deepest grief and shame of the infamous outbreak, which compelled him and his fellow-statesmen to pass the nights guarding each other's houses. At six o'clock that evening, both Houses of Parliament met. Foot Guards were drawn up in Westminster Hall to overawe the mob. Two hundred members of the House of Commons were present, Lord George among them, wearing the blue cockade. Whereupon Colonel Herbert said to him, that if he did not take it out, he would do it for him. Lord George pocketed his cockade. Burke had been surrounded by the rioters, but had pacified them. In the House he made what he considered his finest speech, in which he spoke of "that base gang called the Protestant Association." General Conway moved that the petition be considered when the tumults had subsided, and the House agreed. The rioters went off to attack the Prime Minister's house in Downing Street, but soldiers were on guard, and repulsed them. That day and night were the worst of all. The mob, says Gibbon the historian, "held the town ; 40,000 Puritans, such as they might be

in the time of Cromwell, had started out of their graves." The honest fanatics had mostly retired, and the huge mob consisted of the most brutal blackguards. In addition to the cockades, they now sported thick oak cudgels, and, though exact details are hard to find, it is certain that they acted under the secret instructions of men whose motives were more political than religious. Rumours of Papist invasion had been industriously circulated. Lord George became a mere cipher. That evening, at six, came the famous destruction of Newgate, preceded by burnings and plunderings all down Long Acre and Holborn. Blake, the great poet and painter, was forced along with the rioters in their tumultuous advance, and obliged to witness the burning of Newgate. Most of us I suppose, know what Newgate is like ; I mean, of course, from the outside ; but the Newgate of 1780 was not the Newgate which now stands unused. It had been to a great extent rebuilt in that year, at a cost of £140,000, and was a place of immense strength, holding about three hundred prisoners. The mob ostensibly attacked it to obtain the release of some imprisoned rioters. They surged round the great gates, shouting for Mr. Akerman, the Governor, whom Boswell called "his esteemed friend." He appeared on the roof, and refused to release the prisoners. Dr. Johnson says that he ultimately consented, upon condition of obtaining the Lord Mayor's leave. However that be, the rioters assaulted the great iron-studded gates with axes and sledge-hammers. The Governor's house was meanwhile burnt and pillaged, the mob getting very drunk upon the contents of his cellar. From the Governor's house the flames spread to the chapel, and thence to



the nearest cells, and the cries of the rioters were answered by the cries of the prisoners, either hoping to escape or afraid of being burned. Little impression was made upon the great gates, either by weapons or the flames, but the mob passed in through the breach made by the burning of the Governor's house. The scene was fearful, and it ended in the release of three hundred common thieves and felons of all sorts, including four men condemned to die in a few days. Those four were carried upon the shoulders of the mob through the streets, and Dickens tells us, that old people living in his time remembered to have seen, as children, with fear and trembling, the ghastly faces of those four condemned men passing below their windows.

One of the most interesting accounts of the burning of Newgate is that given by the poet Crabbe, who witnessed it; he describes the prison as being red-hot. That same evening the prison at Clerkenwell was broken open, but the most miserable incident was the burning of Lord Mansfield's house in Bloomsbury Square. They had completely gutted the houses of the few magistrates, such as Sir John Fielding, who showed any activity; and they proceeded to take vengeance upon Lord Mansfield. The mob yelled execrations against him, as a supposed Papist, and he had barely time to escape with Lady Mansfield by the back door. The magnificent house was entirely demolished, the greatest loss being that of the Judge's library, full of books given to him by Pope and Swift and the great writers of the day; with an unrivalled collection of law books, and of legal manuscripts by the Judge himself, and with the memoirs of his time, a work of the

greatest value. Pictures, books, rich furniture and plate, all went upon the bonfire, the rioters making it a point of honour to keep nothing for themselves, but to make a big blaze of all the Popish relics, as they called them. The rioters got drunk as usual, and many were burned or crushed among the ruins. A party of foot-soldiers stood doing nothing, and when a gentleman asked the officer to defend the house, he replied that he could not and would not do anything without authority from the magistrates, and that all the magistrates had run away. At last a stray magistrate was caught ; he rushed through the Riot Act, and the soldiers fired two volleys. But the mob was drunk, and did not mind. They marched off, carrying before them the dead bodies of their friends, with weapons in their hands, preceded by a man, ringing Lord Mansfield's dinner-bell. One of Cowper's happiest poems was written upon the loss of Lord Mansfield's library :

So, then, the Vandals of our isle,  
Sworn foes to sense and law,  
Have burnt to death a nobler pile  
That ever Roman saw.

And Murray mourns o'er Pope and Swift,  
And many a treasure more ;  
The well-judged purchase, and the gift,  
That graced his lettered store.

Their pages mangled, burnt, and torn,  
The loss was his alone ;  
But ages yet to come shall mourn  
The burning of his own.

Upon the next day, Wednesday the 7th, the riots were at their height. All the great houses, public offices, and institutions were barricaded ; terrible rumours flew round the town ; the lunatics were to be let out of Bedlam, the lions out of the Tower, and,

worst of all, 70,000 Scotch Protestants out of Scotland. All shops were shut, and, for protection's sake, "No Popery" was chalked upon the door. Even the Jews in Houndsditch wrote upon their doors, "This is the house of a true Protestant." Rioters went calmly through the streets, demanding money from shops and passengers, walking singly; three of them were mere boys, armed with iron bars from Lord Mansfield's railings. One man on horseback would take nothing but gold. "On Wednesday," wrote Dr. Johnson, "I walked with Dr. Scott to look at Newgate, and found it in ruins, with the fire yet glowing. As I went by, the Protestants were plundering the Sessions House at the Old Bailey. There were not, I believe, a hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in full security, without sentinels, without trepidation, as men lawfully employed, in full day. Such is the cowardice of a commercial place. On Wednesday, they broke open the Fleet, and the King's Bench, and the Marshalsea, and released all the prisoners. At night they set fire to the Fleet and to the King's Bench, and I do not know how many other places; and one might see the glare of conflagration fill the sky from many parts. The sight was dreadful."

Pitt, the great statesman, then a young barrister at Lincoln's Inn, describes the old courts and squares surrounded with fires; but though the rioters besieged the Inns of Court, they did not break through. Burke's brother dates a letter from "the place that once was London." The toll-gates on Blackfriars Bridge were robbed of their takings, and then burned. Thirty-six distinct great fires were to be seen from a distance. Among the places attacked

was the brewery of Mr. Thrale in Southwark, now Barclay and Perkins', but he only lost, writes his friend Dr. Johnson, a few butts of beer. Two attempts were made upon the Bank of England, led by a man on a brewer's horse, hung with chains from Newgate, both in vain; one was driven off by a party under the command of Jack Wilkes, who declared that were he in power, he would not leave one rioter alive. In Holborn, horrible scenes took place at the burning of a great distillery, kept by Mr. Langdale, a Catholic; all the contents of the great vaults were poured into the street, where they caught fire, and the drunken mob, with women and children among them, were seen rolling in the flames, and lapping up the liquid fire. Horace Walpole, who calls the fires "the most horrible sight he ever beheld," remarks that the fashionable world seemed to take no notice; theatres and entertainments, dinners and dances, went on as usual.

Still, the Government did nothing, though plenty of soldiers were in readiness: by the 7th, 10,000 men were assembled, and the militia came up from several counties. The difficulty was the question about the Riot Act: had the soldiers legal right to fire, unless it had been read by a magistrate? George III. was the first man to do his duty. He had shown great courage, having spent two nights in readiness to command the troops, should the mob attack the Queen or the Palace: and he had a great pity for the misguided rioters. "Poor creatures," he said, "they did not mean mischief." He called a Privy Council, and laid the question before them: the whole Cabinet was in doubt. But Wedderburn, the Attorney-General, who was present as a legal assistant,

said the soldiers might fire without the Riot Act: if the riot had actually begun, no formalities were necessary. The Ministers agreed: and the King said he had thought so all along. "There shall be at all events," said he, "one magistrate in the country, who will do his duty." A Proclamation was issued, warning all householders, servants, and apprentices, to stay indoors: and that the King's officers had full power to suppress the riots. "In obedience to an Order of the King in Council, the military are to act without waiting for directions from the civil magistrates." The rioters were checked for the first time, troops and militia were stationed at various points. Colonel Holroyd led the Northumberland Militia, after a forced march of twenty-five miles, to Holborn, where the fires were raging, and the Guards drove back the mob at Blackfriars. Many were shot down, many threw themselves into the river. They had few fire-arms, and the whole city was awake, listening to the sounds of the soldiers firing and the rioters shrieking. The soldiers' bayonets are said to have literally dripped with blood. According to official returns, only 200 rioters were shot; 250 of the wounded were taken to the hospital, of whom 80 died. But the real numbers were many times more than that: digging among the ruins the workmen came upon innumerable remains of burnt and mangled bodies. On the morning of Thursday, the 8th, there was no trace of the mob, except the ruined houses and the blood in the streets. Soldiers were encamped in the Parks, the Museum Garden, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and elsewhere. Many rioters were captured in the ruined cells of Newgate trying to renew the fire. Voluntary associations were formed

"for the defence of liberty and property." The shops were still shut from Tyburn to Whitechapel, only the Bank of England did business. But next day confidence returned, the law courts and the shops were opened.

Cowper writes that day from the country to a friend, "By this time, I suppose, you have ventured to take your fingers out of your ears, being delivered from the deafening shouts of the most zealous mob that ever strained their lungs in the cause of religion." Pitt writes that "we may now sleep again as in a Christian country." Gibbon writes: "Our danger is at an end, but our disgrace will be lasting, and the month of June, 1780, will ever be marked by a dark and diabolic fanaticism, which I had supposed to be extinct." I might quote many other accounts, such as those of Bishop Challoner and Miss Burney, and the accounts of the riots at Bath and Bristol, by Mrs. Thrale.<sup>1</sup>

On the 9th, Lord George Gordon was arrested at his house in Welbeck Street, upon a warrant from the Secretary of State. "If you are sure it is me you want," said his lordship, "I am ready to attend you." He was examined before the Privy Council, where he behaved like a child. He was taken by a detachment of the Guards to the Tower, with the strongest escort ever known to attend a prisoner. The public was still not fully reassured that all was over; the insidious

<sup>1</sup> She writes to Dr. Johnson from Bath: "The mad fools here hooted a poor inoffensive man till he scampered over the wall, and said they were sure he must be the Pope, because he lodged on St. James's Parade, and wore a nightgown with gold flowers on it." And upon the arrival of the soldiers, she writes: "Toryism and martial law and standing armies for ever; and when the Papists are all burned, and the Protestants all hanged for burning them, the Jews may jump for joy. I think no one else can be pleased."

libels of the Protestant agitators had taken too firm a hold upon the minds of those credulous persons to whom a Catholic is a kind of fabulous creature. It had to be authoritatively denied that martial law was to prevail, and the rumours about the Royal Family and their household being concealed Catholics were so numerous, that the Lord Chamberlain was forced to insert in the papers such absurd advertisements as this, "We are authorized to assure the public that Mr. Bicknell, His Majesty's hosier, is as true and faithful a Protestant as any in His Majesty's dominions. We likewise have the best authority for saying that His Majesty's wine-merchants are Protestants."<sup>1</sup>

Among all self-respecting classes there was a strong feeling that the authorities had not done their duty: the Lord Mayor was tried, and convicted of gross neglect. Alderman Bull, Lord George's seconder, had actually encouraged the rioters, allowing the constables in his ward to wear the blue cockade. On the 12th, Parliament met, and there was a speech from the Throne. The Peers discussed the legal question of the Riot Act; Lord Mansfield defended the doctrine of the Royal Proclamation whilst strongly attacking the magistrates. As to the legal question, he said, "I have not consulted books, indeed, I have no books to consult." His legal opponent retorted that because his law books were burned, he need not think no other lawyer had any books. But the House approved of his famous contention, that soldiers firing upon rioters without

<sup>1</sup> The delusion that Catholicism was encouraged and patronized by the Government and by the Executive, finds expression in some of the political satires scribbled by the unfortunate Chatterton, a few years before the outbreak of the Gordon Riots.

civil authority act, not as soldiers in red coats, but as citizens in brown. An address to the King was carried, thanking him for his prompt action. The next day the great Protestant petition was discussed in the House of Commons, and five resolutions were proposed by Burke, and carried, after alterations by Lord North. They insisted upon the retention of the Catholic Relief Bill of two years past, but they also insisted upon the criminality of making converts to Catholicism.

It was on this occasion that Fox made his great speech in favour of universal toleration. Sir George Savile, the original Protestant champion of the Catholics, had been frightened by the riots: and he brought in a Bill to guard against Catholic conversions. No Catholic was to keep a school or to have young boarders in his house: music and dancing masters, for no very obvious reason, were alone exempted. No Catholic was to keep a Protestant apprentice. In spite of Burke's protest against these ungenerous laws, they were carried: Burke declaring that Savile had "a greater prejudice against the Catholics than became so wise a mind." The Bill was thrown out in the Lords. At the end of the Sessions, Lord North moved for an exact return of the damage done by the riots, and claims were sent in to the amount of £130,000. Lord Mansfield and Sir George Savile refused compensation. On the 10th of July a Special Commission sat in Southwark to try the rioters; and on July 28th others were tried in Middlesex at the Old Bailey Sessions. By the end of July all the rioters had been tried: 135 in all, of whom one half were found guilty. Burke wrote many letters in vain, pleading for mercy



towards them: 21 were hanged. Of these, some were boys under fourteen; and George Selwyn, a well-known man about town, who enjoyed the fashionable amusement of seeing executions, wrote in his diary, that he "had never seen boys cry so," which was not surprising. Among those sentenced to death, but reprieved, was Dennis the hangman. Dickens, who represents him as hanged, violates history for picturesque effect. Lord George was tried in February, 1781, his trial having been delayed upon some technical plea. Erskine, the great orator, was his counsel: he made a splendid speech, urging that Gordon had done all he could to stop the riots. Lord Mansfield, who was the judge, summed up against him, but he was acquitted of treason, to the great satisfaction of Dr. Johnson; not for Gordon's sake, but because he held very rightly, that constructive treason is no true charge. Either a man commits treason, or no: you cannot add together a number of acts, each separately not treason, and call the result treason. Hannah More tells us that "the noble prisoner, as the papers call him, had a large Bible open before him all the time, and was very angry, because he was not permitted to read four chapters from Zachariah." Public thanksgivings were offered up in many chapels for his acquittal, and the obstinate Scotch Protestants subscribed £500 towards his defence. The rest of Lord George's life was strange enough; he was excommunicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury for refusing to give evidence before an ecclesiastical court. In 1782, he was convicted of libelling Marie Antoinette, the French Queen—a fact alluded to by Burke in his *Reflections upon the French Revolution*,

when he contrasts the behaviour of the English, who would not allow an Englishman to insult the Queen of France, with that of the French, who drove her from the throne to prison and to death—but before receiving sentence, Gordon fled to Amsterdam. The Dutch burghers sent him home again, and he lived in one of the dirtiest slums of Birmingham, where he turned Jew, and adopted Jewish customs and dress. He called himself the Right Hon. Israel Bar Abraham George Gordon. He wore a long beard, and refused to speak to any Jew who did not. He was arrested in December for contempt of court, and committed to Newgate, then rebuilt. There he lived till his death, at the age of forty-three, in 1793, supporting himself by painting, and conducting himself extravagantly. His last great grief was, that he must be buried in the prison ground, and not in a Jewish cemetery.

I have now given a rough sketch of these great riots. If any one wish to read the finest comment upon them, let me refer him to Burke's magnificent speech in 1780 to his constituents at Bristol, upon his support of Catholic relief. It lost him his seat, but it does him lasting honour. It is appropriate to conclude with a moral. If we go over Thames into Southwark, we shall find what Shakespeare calls a "sermon in stones." The rioters assembled in St. George's Fields, Southwark, then open ground. Upon that ground now stand two remarkable buildings. One is the lunatic asylum of Bethlehem, commonly called Bedlam; the other is the Catholic Cathedral of St. George.

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